By the same Author

There Lay The City
Just Flesh
Out of Dust
I Go West
Oh You English!
The Pulse of Oxford

D. F. KARAKA

CHUNGKING DIARY

with a foreword
by
EDGAR SNOW

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To

DARAB

in

friendship.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This book professes to be nothing more than a personal diary to be read by those who have always taken a kindly interest in what I do. It is not easy to sit down to recapitulate a past, however recent, when one is trying also to plan the future. This is not by way of apology, but only explanation.

I take this opportunity of thanking first Sir Alwyn Ezra, who made it possible for me to go to Chungking and thus gave me, as the Chinese Consul in Bombay put it "a break in life." For that I am very grateful. It is not only for his personal generosity to me that I am grateful, but also because it is the first instance in which encouragement has been given to an Indian journalist, who never gets the opportunity of covering events abroad, as do the journalists of other countries. I can only try to repay this debt with my gratitude.

My thanks are also due to my father who, in his retirement from service, has given me so much of his time, looking over proofs and making corrections and suggestions on my hurriedly-written manuscript. (Though once we have allowed twelve whole lines to be repeated !!) I am grateful even more for that faith he has always had in me, when it has been difficult to find encouragement elsewhere.

And last but not the least I am grateful to China for its hospitality. More than I can ever say or repay. As is the old Chinese proverb : "To have seen it once is more than hearing about it a hundred times."

FOREWORD

THERE are two good reasons why Mr. Karaka's book ought to be highly recommended to the general public. First, I may as well intimate at the outset, since the reader will sooner or later make the discovery for himself, that scattered among the sparkling pages are several noteworthy excerpts from the writings of Edgar Snow. Not only that, but they are apparently quoted by the author with approval. Far be it from me to deny that this is an altogether helpful and encouraging tendency which ought to be lauded. However, I am sorry to say that I was not aware of this advertisement when, before having seen his manuscript, I accepted Mr. Karaka's invitation to write an introduction, otherwise I could have provided still more extensive quotations.

Nevertheless, it is an established maxim in our profession that dog does not eat dog and ordinarily I enthusiastically eschew such temptations as this. But an exception had to be made in the present case for a second reason. That is because it is still a rare and delightful thing to find an Indian writer of renown actually devoting a whole book to travels in China, and a book fully cognizant of China's importance in shaping the future of India and the rest of the world. The energy and enterprise and sense of responsibility to society thus displayed by Mr. Karaka seemed to me to demand tribute and congratulations from any fellow journalist who flatters himself to think he has a

mission in the world to disseminate useful knowledge about his fellow men to each other.

For Karaka's pilgrimage to Chungking reflects one remarkable change which has come over Indian political life in the past decade. Those who imagine that Indian nationalism is extremely narrow and insular in its outlook—and just now that is a common criticism among Western liberals—do not realize how its foundation has broadened in contrast to the recent past. And there is no better illustration of this than Indians' interest in China and their increasing admiration and esteem for and even desire to emulate the Chinese people.

When I first visited India in 1931 I met Mahatma Gandhi in Simla during his talks with Lord Irwin and I remember trying to engage him in conversation about China. I had just come down over the caravan trails from Yunnan and there was then no Burma Road. It had taken me nearly two months to reach Bhamo from Kunming—but one leg of a trip Mr. Karaka made by air from Calcutta in a few hours. Naturally I was still impressed with the amazing fact that these two countries, with the oldest continuous civilizations, with close religious and cultural ties, and which between themselves hold about half the men and women of the world, had such poor means of communication between them. Their cultural centers were farther from each other by existing land routes than either one was from Europe or America—just as far apart, in fact, as in the days when Buddhism was carried over the Hima-

layas to the Chinese Empire. And their popular know·edge of each other was not much more up-to-date than the *Travels in the West,* that classic description of a visit to India written a couple of millenniums ago by China's most famous traveller, Chang Chi.

Incidentally Mr. Karaka might well have considered the present volume a kind of sequel to his *I Go West,* one of the best pictures we have of the impact of Europe on a sensitive Indian mind. In reverent memory of Chang Chi, as well as in acknowledgment of the fact that China is the true Orient to an Indian just as much as to Europeans, he could then have called this book *I Go East,* an excellent title to which I hereby relinquish all rights !

But to return to the Mahatma and 1931. When I commented about the phenomenon of near neighbours thus living so far apart, he replied something along these lines :

"How could it be otherwise ? Burma and India would like to be tied more closely to China, but we are not masters here. And the British do not want us to get into close contact with our friends."

"All the same it is odd," I replied, "that this condition has prevailed for hundreds of years. There may be this to be said for it, however. As far as I know China and India have never had a war with each other. Shall we infer from that that the less men have to do with each other the better they get along ?"

The Mahatma chuckled. But there our conversation about China came to an end. To my disappoint-

ment he did not ask me a single question about that country. I thought it indicated a lack of interest in the outside world, but it seemed justified when the fate of his civil disobedience movement then hung in the balance. Obviously he did not feel that any experience of China could be pertinent to the solution of his own immediate problems.

How differently Gandhi and other Indian leaders view China today! The Burma-Assam-China frontier, so long a barrier to intercourse, has now become a gateway, a center of struggle between mighty forces contending for control of men's destiny on a world scale. Similarly Indians now feel politically and spiritually welded to China. They are aware of the mutual interdependence of their destiny. Hence it was characteristic of this new era and of the realization that henceforth China and India are bound to live as intimate neighbours, that Gandhi troubled to make clear to the Chinese people the meaning of his movement for immediate independence.

"Because of the feeling I have toward China," he wrote Chiang Kai Shek just before his recent imprisonment, "I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to the British Power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defense against the Japanese or to embarrass you in your struggle. Whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China..."

The Generalissimo's visit to India in the spring of 1942 was, significantly, the only trip he has made to a foreign country since he became a leader in the Chinese Nationalist Movement in 1924. It was in a way a return of the visit Jawaharlal Nehru made to Chungking in 1940. It is significant also that Nehru's trip to Chungking was his first to the Far East—in contrast with many years spent in England and Europe. The new orientation which Indian political relationships are likely to take after the war is indicated by this exchange of visits.

China made a tremendous impression on Jawaharlal. He returned to India with a deeper respect for the courage and fortitude of Eastern peoples, and for the durability of certain human values in Asiatic culture. Through him Indian nationalists acquired a broader interest in China, and hence a broader international outlook, too.

"Jawaharlal Nehru," said Gandhi, "whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country, has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle."

It may turn out in fact that few trips in history have had such influence on the Far East as Nehru's flight to Chungking. I know that concern for China and the effect which any Congress move might have upon her resistance have ever since been uppermost in Nehru's mind. During the hours leading up to the fateful A.I.C.C. resolution at Bombay, that was especially true. When recently he said somewhere

that he would rather lose a limb than harm China, I am sure he meant it quite literally. China has no more devoted friend alive—and hence neither has the cause of world freedom and brotherhood.

Thus it is clear enough that China and India are bound to see a lot more of each other in the future, so that books along similar lines will follow this pioneer effort by Mr. Karaka. Beyond their obvious common interests of the moment so well defined in this volume, students in the early future will seek out basic similarities and dissimilarities between these two countries in an attempt to analyze and synthesize political and social experiences.

The fact is that Indian and Burmese intellectuals have spent altogether too much time looking for analogies and guidance in the history of Europe and America rather than in closer historical study of contemporary Japan, China and Soviet Russia. India can learn much from all three of them, but she seems likely to find her easiest parallels in the social travail of China.

India and China are both large countries and both have huge populations and numerous tribes and races. India has a Hindu majority and a Muslim minority and China has a nominally Buddhist majority with a Muslim minority. Each people has a common cultural heritage and each has a language and script which can easily be nationalized. Both countries have for long periods in the past been dominated by foreign conquerors which except in the case of the British in

India have always been absorbed. In both countries about 90 per cent. of the population is agrarian ; industrialization is still in rather primitive stages. In both countries the essential conditions exist which should bring about the ultimate unity of a modern state ; and in both countries there are powerful internal reactionary forces which must be overcome, once national freedom is established, before they can make their fullest contribution to modern world civilization.

There are of course profound differences to be drawn too, but these analogies provide valid reason for supposing that, once India is free, this people may demonstrate a political genius and governing ability which few Europeans seem disposed to think they possess. Most observers have now forgotten the fact that until a few years ago China's capacity for self-government was also gravely questioned or altogether denied among many "experts" on that country. It is not many years since Lord Beresford wrote a book called *The Break-up Of China*, which frankly and rather complacently pictured the inevitable carving up of that empire, owing to the Chinese people's alleged inherent inability to unite and measure up to the problems and responsibilities of modern statehood. And his book reflected the pattern of thinking in Europe concerning India as well as China. Indeed even in 1937 one could hear the same opinions uttered with pontifical certainty in the clubs along the China coast.

But oddly enough when today the richest part of that country is already colonized, the notion that

China is not able to manage her own affairs is no longer current in our chanceries at all. The reason is that China has demonstrated, through five years of bitter armed struggle, her toughness and indestructibility. India, it is regrettable but seems probable, will have to demonstrate in no less puissant manner, her right to manage her own destiny in a dynamic world before the skeptics are silenced.

Mr. Karaka's book thus has a practical as well as entertainment value. It suggests for Indians many ways in which to prepare themselves to meet the challenges still lying ahead in the path toward freedom. It is likewise a vivid document of personal experience, a lively and witty response to the stimuli of a historic struggle going on in India's front-yard—and hence the next best thing to going to Chungking to see the drama itself.

DELHI, EDGAR SNOW.
August 31, 1942.

PRELUDE TO CHINA

SOME of us had been conscious of a growing sense of frustration for a long time, even as we had been of the war coming gradually closer. British statesmanship, which had been resurrected from the debacle of Munich and appeasement, had still failed to tackle the Indian question. Caught unprepared in World War II, Britain had focused its attention on its home defence too much for it to have any time for the defence of other parts of its Empire. The best brains of England were tackling the problems of the little island fortress and of Europe and Russia, leaving the East to fend for itself. The government in India was more or less oblivious of the implications of total war. The popular ministries had resigned. A bureaucracy tried to carry on the government of the country by what amounted to edicts. Mediocre men found placed jobs, because they qualified for them on grounds of what is euphemistically called loyalty. Businessmen of no special ability got pushed to the forefront of public life. The real Indian leaders were generally reluctant to participate in any war effort. Many young men knew not what to make of everything that

happened around them. If they felt a sense of frustration, it was because those in power had neither the vision nor the desire to allow young men to do anything that involved a devolution of authority, and yet these same men who frustrated the young seemed to want to do little themselves. No one wanted to shoulder any responsibility because the whole system of the administration in India was vitiated by the evil habit of shelving decisions resulting from a highly specialized process of presenting difficulties.

Then I met an Englishman under strange circumstances. Through a mutual friend he had conveyed a desire to talk things over with me. I went. The gist of his first ten or fifteen minutes' conversation with me was that I was "wasting my talent" in destructive criticism. It was significantly stated that of course my talent would be rewarded! It was a little disappointing to me that an Englishman whose country had been battered and pushed to the wall could still believe that loyalty and moral support could be bought from India. Perhaps the Indian is to blame for this impression for in the past the Indian has often sold himself cheaply. The New Year and Birthday Honours lists are the biannual Loyalty Bloodstock Sales. But there were so many amongst us who felt strongly about the war and who wanted to see something done, if only we were given a chance. But Government had no use for us. I felt they wanted new talent to follow in the rut and to add to the scrap-heap of do-nothing.

These were the views I expressed as we talked for over three hours and I felt that I had made him understand our point of view and understand also how frustrated some of us felt. For since then he has helped me so much for which I am grateful.

One morning I read in bold headlines that the great Marshal of China—the Generalissimo Chiang-kai-shek had arrived in India on a military and political mission. That was great news. Could he, I asked myself, be able to find for us the link that would bind us to the chain of democracies that were fighting on one side in this war? His presence in India inspired me. What a change had come over the world! As the American magazine *Time* put it, here was a man who by the old standards was only a native, but by the new, one of the half-dozen most important men in the world.

The Generalissimo came and he went and little seemed to have happened, or if anything did happen, it was withheld from us. Not until Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru arranged a press conference, did we get a glimpse of 'our valiant neighbour' as he was rightly called. For a man who was the spearhead of Chinese resistance for four long years did not come to India merely to experience the sensation of walking on red carpet. High officials at Delhi to whom I pointed out the possibilities afforded by his presence in our midst, replied in the usual manner of the bureaucracy that it was all very difficult.

Then one night, almost towards the end of the

Generalissimo's visit, I got up from bed and wrote a letter to New Delhi. I promised myself that it was the last time I would ever make any concrete suggestion to Government, knowing how they had made me feel all along the line. Much as I wanted to do something to make the people of my country realize the dangers of the situation, I wanted always to do it in the way in which I had faith and not in the way it had been done before and had failed. My chief interest was in war-time propaganda. I felt that Government was making the wrong sort of appeal to the people of India. The great weapon of the radio had become as one critic had put it "just a perfume spray." Censorship was cumbersome and vague and unclear. I remember once being disallowed from saying : "Mr. Molotov said the other day in the *Pravda*...," because that came under 'advertising' the *Pravda* and I was asked to substitute the words : "...a Russian paper..." On another occasion I was disallowed from quoting without comment from the Secretary of State's speech in the House of Commons, because it would put Mr. Amery in a ludicrous position! A strange comment from a Government department on the Secretary of State's House of Commons speech, I thought.

In other spheres, such as advertising, Government hopelessly missed the mark. For many months I never observed the Defence—Bonds and Savings—Certificates advertisement, because I always thought that these advertisements were of some baby-food like Mellin's or Glaxo. Indians were asked to join the

ranks in World War II on the inducement that the Army gave you good food and good pay and a pension! Recruits for the Navy were offered the great thrill of seeing the world—the sort of advertisement one would have expected from the house of Thomas Cook & Son. A Defence week was to be held in Bombay, with a view to sell more Defence Loans, when these same loans had already been thrown back on the market and sold at less than par.

Propaganda has been regarded in World War II as a weapon as important as munitions. But over the air, the Government were content to Bethoven and Bach to the people of India. Someone even brilliantly brought out a fund for the bombing of Berlin and Tokyo and, said the organizers of the fund, you could choose which of the two capitals you would like to bomb with your contribution! Nothing could have been cruder than that appeal—specially in a country steeped in non-violence. Moreover, everyone knew that Tokyo was still not so easily accessible for bombing.

All these things I remembered when I sat down to write my letter to New Delhi, which was to ask the Government to consider the advisability of sending an Indian journalist to Chungking, with a view to bring China nearer to India, as was obviously the intention and desire both of the Generalissimo and the Government of India.

Six unnecessary weeks of delay passed, but Government were unable to make a decision.

Luck was on my side, however, and by chance I found in Sir Alwyn Ezra a sponsor and I took the next train to Delhi. What could not be done by letters and telegrams and telephones for six weeks, got put through in eight hours after I met Sir Frederick Puckle.

It was my first visit to the Imperial city, which was then throbbing with excitement at the forthcoming visit of Stafford Cripps. There was an atmosphere of tense expectancy about the place. High officials paced up and down like prospective fathers in the ante-rooms of lying-in hospitals.

What a strange capital Lutyens had built for India! A capital that epitomized an odd assortment of periods—a Mogul-named Akbar Road jostled with the Avenue of Queen Victoria. The Secretariat had its inmates pigeon-holed in their cells and pugreed puttewallas were watching over them.

Government agreed to facilitate transportation and to make it possible for me to get to Chungking, ...BUT...it was subject to the condition that the Chinese Government had no objection! Why should the Government of India even visualize the possibility of Chungking having any objection to an Indian correspondent when they welcomed correspondents from all over the 'Allied' world?

I would have to write so much to express the feelings I experienced at that time up to the day I caught the Calcutta mail to leave for my first big assignment in journalism—War-time China. But there

is a war on and I am one of those who believe that I must gulp most of those feelings now. It was not any particular individual but the whole system that stood between me and what I wanted to do. Sometimes I have even felt that perhaps it was myself, my background, my environment. For there was a significant remark made by Puckle when I went to see him to thank him for what he had done. A pleasantly-greying man, too obviously destined for the Governorship of a province, he sat on the lawn of his garden, gazing into blank space, sad and distant and brooding over the progress of the war. "Some people think I am rash," Puckle said, "in sponsoring a trip by D. F. Karaka ...but I am only interested in winning this war."

That was the prelude to China.

MY DIARY BEGINS

I *Calcutta, Mac's House*

YESTERDAY was a flop from my point of view. The train was over two hours late and I missed my lunch date with Arthur Moore. In the afternoon—nearing five, went with Mac and R. M. to the tennis courts for a while. Lay back and watched the planes fly overhead. There is a lot of activity in the air.

Mac has no cook, so we had a bite at the "300 Club." Jawaharlal had wired me here which was a very pleasant surprise. I have a hunch his introduction to China will carry more weight than any other I can have. After supper, which was cold meat and salad, but good, we strolled along to a tough joint for a drink or two and to see 'them dames' dance with hot dogs and Englishmen. The get-up was more attractive than the people who were too local for my liking. But just as we were getting bored, in blew a gent from the Southern Seas. He was almost George-Raft-in-the-flesh without the Hollywood polish. No flies on him. He was tough—tough as they come. He wore one of those water-proof short jackets gathered at the back—a sort of short-short affair. Gold in his teeth. Shiny black

hair. Canadian born, I discovered, but his mother must have been a hula dame, of that Mac and I were sure. He picked up the most horrible piece of flesh which was available. She had never controlled her diet and she wore her hair up like the Sikhs with a tuft at the top. It did not suit her. But the tough guy took her in his arms and danced cheek to cheek, his shiny black hair falling like Adolf's over his forehead. We got back and Mac and I discussed the war from various angles. We tried to take stock of the position as it stood. Had the Russians driven the Germans sufficiently back ? Did the Chinese guerilla offensives really amount to anything much ? What would be the telling factor in this war ? Would it all eventually depend upon American production ? Would there be a decision reached or would it all end in an exhausted world ? I collected some local dope of measures taken in Calcutta, which in view of the present position was illuminating.

This morning, my first visitor was a male fan who arrived complete with two books for autographing ! I did one for him and he did not understand why I did not do the other. But then I am funny that way. It is a bank holiday. Met Arthur Moore at the *Statesman* office. He was very nice to me. He told me confidentially that he was likely to come to Chungking himself. "They" wanted him to go. Moore was very helpful in suggestions and in his office I ran into Galvin of the British Ministry of Information. He is the man who has been making arrange-

ments for me in Chungking. Lunched at Firpo's with the boys and then to the Chinese Consul-General Dr. Pao, with whom I had an appointment. Jawaharlal had wired to him too, which is so kind of him, knowing what the quickened tempo of New Delhi must be like, now that the negotiations have broken down.

Pao is a very cultured Chinese with an American wife. Mac told me that once at the Calcutta Rotary Club which Pao was addressing, he was asked by a questioner which of the two cultures—Japanese or Chinese—was the more ancient. Pao replied: "I have not read much about Japanese culture, so I cannot say for sure, but I have been reading the history of China (a series of unending volumes somewhat of the bulk of the Encyclopedia Britannica) and the first time I came across a reference to Japan was in volume 26." My three-quarters of an hour with Pao was the best thing that has happened pre-Chungking.

From the Chinese Consul-General, I went straight to the British Ministry of Information. It was so different from any Government of India office. Personnel and atmosphere were human. Galvin suggested the most important thing for me was to take to Chungking two bottles of Scotch. "That is the best letter of introduction you can take to the press gang." As I left, he wished me luck. "Don't expect anything of Chungking because there is nothing to expect, except the spirit which permeates the place. It is tough, but it is the same for all. That is why you will like it very much." So Galvin said. He was a middle-aged

youngish sort of man. A blue-eyed Australian, but smelt of London proper. Fleet Street back to life. His little office in which at mid-afternoon he worked by electric light reminded me of the *bureau* of some American correspondent in the Elysée of the Paris I knew.

Back home to type a few letters. Mac and R. M. are at tennis. Planes still continue to fly overhead. There is an atmosphere of expectant waiting. The blackout is real black. Cars are lined white on the sides. Policemen carry tin hats.

My plane leaves to-morrow but the exact time is not given as this is hush-hush. All I know is that they do not want to get to Lashio during the day. That means Chungking looks some time like midnight if all is well. Heard that when Wavell visited Burma on an unscheduled flight, he just had time to step out of his plane at Lashio and take cover from Japanese bombers which came to the aerodrome about the same time. This first part of the flight is the hot spot of the run.

Reports I have received here about Chungking make it obvious that I am going to miss the comforts of Kashmir House—plumbing and sanitation included. No Imperial Chryslers. No Andrew Sisters. No Tino Rossi. The house roofs are thatched, I am told, because they have been so often bombed and blown away.

It is all there, waiting for me.

II *Press Hostel, Chungking*

I HAD gone very easy on the morning meal and so when our plane took off at Dum-Dum, I was fairly famished. The four-hour hop to Lashio was very much better than I had expected. The pilot told me later that I was lucky because usually the weather is more bumpy. It was flying over hill-top for most of the time, and as we glided into Lashio it was dusk. I could see from the plane that Lashio had been badly bombed, and I felt I would not be flying over it again for quite a while. The sun was setting as we waited to refuel. A sort of pale-crimson spread. Red earth. Dark green hills. Pale bluey-grey sky. It was rich in colour, baroque and oriental with a strong touch of the Burman even in the sky. I began to see that peculiar something which you see in Chinesey eyes. That little strained squint. Pronounced cheek bones. Jet black shiny hair. Olive complexions. "Yellow faces that spouted pigeon English," as the White Man would say. There was a reshuffle of passengers. Some Chinese women and children got in. And we pushed on to Kunming.

By now it was dark. There was a streak of

lightning in the sky. I realized it was my birthday and I hadn't eaten all day. I ventured to tackle a sandwich which had a layer of smelly cheese. The lights in the plane were switched off but occasionally the far-off lightning streak lit up the sleepy faces lined up in the plane.

So we got to Kunming some two and a half hours later. My first impression of it was that of a stemless Christmas tree that floated on the shimmering waters. I suppose it was the Yangtze, but I am not sure. While we waited to refuel I got out to smoke a cigarette and stretch my legs. Some of the boys of the A.V.G. had come to meet the plane. I spoke to them. They appeared to be in perfect fighting condition and they had that mental make-up which is essential to a good pilot. They were a clean, young and determined lot. I was amazed to find that in spite of their courage and daring they were not a rough crowd. Had I not known who they were, I would have mistaken them for the members of a Hollywood company—the sort of supporting cast to an air picture of Robert Taylor. But what they are doing in Burma is no Hollywood studio stunt, believe me. They have come in answer to a Chinese prayer which Chenault, their leader, must have heard. They first came into action to defend the Burma Road but they are fast playing the role of guardians of China in the air. Though often compared with the Lafayette Escadrille, they are not untrained and reckless adventurers. They were already fully trained technicians in the U. S. Forces, when they

were allowed to volunteer for the Chinese Air Force on the basis of a civil contract. While so doing they retain their commissions in the U. S. Forces.

They are a very young and human lot, still interested in Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, detective fiction, glamour girls, film magazines and baseball.

We left Kunming soon and were back in darkness in the air. Our plane was a D.C.3 and was a peach of a plane to ride in. Barring an occasional shake it moved like a stately bird. The pilot, an American, gave me the feeling he knew his stuff. I have never landed so easily at Croydon or Le Bourget as I did in the darkness and between the hills at Kunming and Chungking. This C. N. A. C. is the toughest air line there ever was. There are a few American pilots but on the whole it is a Chinese show. They tell me here that before Hongkong fell the C. N. A. C. used to maintain, for nearly four years, a service over enemy lines. They have only lost one plane, the *Kwelin*, due to enemy action and that was unfortunate.

When I got back into the plane at Kunming, I found my seat was taken by a high Chinese air officer. My hat and coat were pushed on to another seat, further back. This, I thought was tough, because the C. N. A. C. was a civil plane on which I had paid my fare—a wad of dough. But the officer in question was armless, so I let it pass and felt the nicer for having given away with grace.

Chungking was another two and a half hours

away. When we got there it was midnight-in-Bombay on one wrist watch and one-thirty by Chungking time on the other. We landed on the bed of the river though this will not be possible in summer when the river rises some 50 feet. Someone from the British Press Attache's Office had come tö meet me, which was fortunate because I learnt later that the alternative was to sleep the night on the ground in the Customs shed.

Three hun dred steps were facing me, for Chungking is nothing if not steps. I did a few and then thought it wiser to take a chair. Drove to the house where the boys of the Embassy lived. and I had to sleep the night, sharing a room with someone who was already fast asleep and whom I was told not to disturb.

I was famished. Tried to be simple and asked for some coffee and "just bread, butter and cheese." My host laughed "BUTTER—No, Sir." That's a luxury here. Cheese does not exist and coffee is some Rs. 20/- a tin. I must start thinking in different terms from now. Fed myself on bread and local cherry jam. Drank water for thirst and soon tucked into bed with a very thin straw mattress separatin g my tired limbs from a hard plank. Next morning—which was only a fe w hours later—I awoke to the sound of a trumpet which had no reason to blow at all and weird street-cries of pedlars hawking their wares.

My room-mate turned out to be an Englishman who had escaped from Hongkong after the Japs had come. He was in a coal-mine business but was now

helping at the Embassy as so many others were. Men like him make better diplomats and foreign-office staff than do those cut-and-dried Eton-tied specimens that are known as the Foreign Office type. He was not alone, for in Chungking there are so many Englishmen who are all consistently pleasant. Circumstances and conditions of living and the war have brought about a *camaraderie* which is unbelievable. These men have seen war. They know what it means. They have escaped from enemy-occupied territory and tasted the hospitality of a people whose country till only a little while ago was dismissed by a former British Foreign Secretary as "a mere geographical expression."

Prices here of imported goods are prohibitive. A tin of 555, when one can get it, costs 500 Chinese dollars—a little under Rs. 100/-. Tooth paste, shaving cream, soap and little details like these are ridiculously expensive. Twenty times their normal price. Already sharp eyes have spotted that I have things which they can buy when I leave. They have been asked for and bid for by the press gang at the hostel. A new Baby Hermes like the one on which I type would fetch £100/- sterling. I feel that had I brought my Imperial Chrysler here, I could have sold it for enough to retire on for the rest of my life. What actually happens here, however, is that a stage comes when you just stop wanting the things that cannot be got.

I had to attend to the details of getting myself fixed up. In many ways European life here reminds

me of undergraduate Oxford. Houses give the feeling of Oxford digs though of a more humble kind. Most of the furniture in Chungking even in this swagger press hotel is just of deal—unpolished boxwood; except, for an occasional stray piece that some Chinese gentleman may have salvaged from the bombing. It is rough and ready, but one gets to appreciate life when you realize how much bombing this place has stood. They have got so tough here that when a house gets knocked down or bombed away, they build another in its place in little over a week. Maybe if it is a more elaborate affair like a Ministry of Government, then it would take two weeks to rebuild.

Lunched with the radio crowd and then to the hostel, which is close to the Board of Information. All this sounds important and probably is, but to look at, this press hostel is just a thatched-roof affair compared to which the outhouses and servants quarters of a Bombay house are palaces. But for a change, it gives one a grand feeling to be away from the more comfortable things in life—away from plush seats and cushioned chairs. War-time living in Chungking is more stimulating than doing nothing in India. Your soul suddenly feels as if it is full.

I was lucky to get a room here because one had only fallen vacant this morning. The hostel is a sort of co-operative affair where expenses are shared. Certain luxuries are to be specially paid for. You can have a cup of bad coffee for three dollars and fifty, but you can have only one each morning. A bath, which in

Chungking language amounted to three inches of water in a dilapidated tub, would cost eight dollars a time in winter. That is roughly a rupee and eight annas. Now that it is not so cold, you can get one for half the price. There is an essential desire to share "luxuries" whenever possible. A tin of cigarettes or a drop of Scotch is something too good to be enjoyed alone.

Living here at the moment is Colin MacDonald of the *London Times*, who has been in China for 20 years. His Chinese name is Ma, which means horse, and he was called that till Roderick MacDonald, an Australian War Correspondent, arrived on the scene. Roderick was the younger man and so to avoid confusion, Colin was called La Ma, which means Old Horse. There is Spencer Moosa with Nina, his Russian wife. Moosa works for the *Associated Press* of America and is one of those hard-boiled, conscientious, tough, cynical but kind men. As an agency man he is true to the type. There is Tommy Chao and his Chinese wife. Tommy works for *Reuters* and his knowledge of the language and the country often gives him an hour or two's start over the boys. James Stewart, who is also married represents *Time, Life* and the Columbia Broadcasting System. He seems to be on his feet more than the others and has the typical approach of the papers he represents. Harrison Forman of the *New York Times* and the N. B. C. can't help but being genial because of his premature "middle-age spread," which makes rickshaw coolies say "No" to him when he wants a ride. His network is said to have a listening public

of some twenty million, though this claim is often subject to rude remarks from the boys! Nothing worries Harrison, however, and he takes it all in good part because he knows it eases the monotony of living. "Pepper" Martin of the *United Press* is true to name. He is one of the most complex characters I have run into for a long time. He varies between a tough agency man and one who is conscious of the moral issues raised by this war. He escaped from enemy occupied territory, doing the long trail by *sampan* and foot. Short of clothes and tall in height, Pepper has difficulty in buying anything that will fit him well.

There are two Australian correspondents here—Douglas Wilkie and Roderick MacDonald. Like me they are not of the permanent crew. They still remember "civilization," as we refer to it, and the taste of gin and what a hot cup of coffee would feel like.

Such is the press *entourage*. It is the heart of the hostel.

Typewriters click all night and as late as two and three in the morning. You bed when you want to. You get up when you want to. Only meal time has to be observed. Lunch, which is Chinese, is at twelve-thirty. Dinner which is "foreign" is at seven. It is difficult to feel when you are having plain steak and onions that it is a "foreign" meal. And through every meal and throughout the day, all the time, there is unsugared tea. It keeps meeting you wherever you go.

At press conferences, at special interviews, at social calls, before lunch, at lunch, after lunch—and the same all over again at every meal and at every hour—it's unsugared tea, sometimes with little chrysanthemum flowers floating on top but it's always tea and tea and tea in China. Sugar here is brown and coarse and unsweet. Milk is only rarely to be seen.

A Chinese soldier, with his bayonet fixed, stands guard over us, and at night you can hear him pace the ground. Through my window which has not yet got its curtain, his silhouette can be seen—a small, squat figure, steel-helmeted and arms-shouldered. The grey he wears is very impressive, and so like that of the *poilu* of France. In fact it is strange that Chungking is in many ways like France—not Paris of course, but France of the interior. Its people are like an Oriental-French. The women in the streets might just as well have been walking in Marseilles—dressed in sombre dark blue, with black shiny hair and high colour on their cheeks. The climate too is something like that. Sometimes grey skies and a constant nip in the air. Sometimes hot and foul and sticky.

Chungking is situated in the province of Szechuan which means "Four Rivers." Szechuan is the second largest province in China and the most populated. Right up to the time the Central Government made Chungking the war-time capital, it remained one of the most backward holes on earth. To-day, architecturally and aesthetically, it is not much better. It is still a jerry-built city of string and bamboo. But

since the Government have moved here, there is some order and construction out of the once planless, overgrown medieval town. But it is the spirit of the place that is its chief attraction. Chungking, even after the war, will not be forgotten. I hear that it has already been decided that when normal conditions are restored and the war is over and the Government moves again to Nanking, Chungking will remain the auxiliary capital of China. It is a fitting tribute which the Chinese people have decided to pay to that bit of the good earth which has been the symbol of China's fight for freedom. Bombed and blasted and often flattened in parts, this much-battered but still indomitable war-time capital of China seems to stand up, re-echoing China's will to fight. In four solid years of war, Chungking has known 117 air raids. It has tasted the blast of 22,000 bombs which have killed some 20,000 people and maimed or wounded a little less than 10,000. These figures are based on official statistics available here.

From all accounts I seem to have arrived here in time for the year's bombing season, that is, if it will be in fashion for Japanese bombers to come to Chungking this year. In the day or two I have been here I have begun to realize something of what we in India vaguely refer to as 'war-time conditions.' I am able to see for myself first-hand how co-operative living and organizing to save and to help one another is the only answer to the problems of living created by war. Here in this thatched-roof hostel as in all war-time China, it

becomes more and more evident to me how tolerance and mutual understanding and the spirit of "live and let live" are essential to war-time living. The slogan of war-time China seems to me to be: "We unite to defend" and well might the slogan of this press hostel be: "We help each other because one day, very soon, someone is bound to need help from someone else." It is as Galvin said, "the same for all," and that is why life seems so beautiful out here, even with only a thatched roof over my head and a plank-bed to lie on and a deal table on which to do my writing. This hostel has been bombed over and over again and the present structure is by no means its first edition. Like most houses in Chungking, it has more than once been razed to the ground but also like all houses in Chungking it seems to rise again—like a Phoenix from its own ashes. It tells you more than ever you can learn from newspapers that there is a war on and it shapes your living in terms of war and it changes your outlook to match with the conditions which prevail in the era in which we live.

There is no panic here in spite of four years of ruthless bombing and it is not with fear that women and little children look up to the skies in spite of the hell-fire which has poured from above and which has brought so much death and destruction. It is this moral force behind the Chinese struggle which holds out even when so much seems to have been lost. The Japanese may capture persons and conquer territory, but it is the soul of the Chinese people which will

still remain free.

Jim Stewart told me how, during air raids, when he would sit all keyed-up in the dug-out, a bundle of shaken nerves as the place would rock and blast with nearby bombs, he would see some of the Chinese quietly asleep in the corner as if nothing important was happening. In many ways they reveal the sort of frame of mind which we saw in India during the days of satyagraha. Add to that spirit infinite patience and infinite sacrifice, a complete lack of fear, a sense of humour when bombed out of homes and left stranded, and you have some idea of the people among whom I live.

By nature, the Chinese are not an inquisitive lot and like the Indian he does not gather round an overturned car or get into crowds in the streets because from early childhood he has been taught to mind his own business. The result is that they often go about as if they did not care who was on the road and what they did. Yet, at the same time, when someone was in distress they manage to render what help they could give. Altogether it is quite baffling how they mix an isolated attitude towards life with a constant rendering of help.

Life begins early in the morning in Chungking. Some of the Government offices start work as early as 7. They work long hours during the day and I am told that when the bombing was quite heavy last year, officials would take their work into the dug-outs, because going underground had become a routine. So that

Japan can bomb and re-bomb this capital of China, but from what I can see, Japan is wasting its time and its bombs, if Japan intends thereby to break China's morale. On the surface there is nothing to bomb except these thatched-roof houses which can be put up in a week or a fortnight. Everything that is put up in the shape of a house is only for the period of the war. Rumour says that there is a beautiful plan of a new city that will be built on this gorgeous spot—a city of hills with the Yangtze still flowing between them—a city that will have beautiful gardens and little houses in which people will live in peace and without the shadow of Japanese bombers falling on them. But until the war is over, these plans are resting on someone's shelves, waiting for that moment to come. Waiting, still waiting as the people of Chungking have done so long, sipping tea without sugar and milk, sipping, sipping all the time. A country that can take such blows so long without complaining cannot lose. Superiority in arms and ammunition will take the Japanese a long way. They may conquer territory and drive the Chinese out of province after province, but the Japs will find no peace on Chinese soil. The Japs may have been able to get a few puppet troops to fight for them, but it is this vast population of five hundred million that will still resist. Guerrillas and commando bands will break up every established Japanese position even as they are doing now.

During the day we had a press conference where

a military spokesman told us about the war in Burma. There is a press conference held here every week because the Chinese are most anxious to keep the press and the world informed about happenings in the war as soon as possible. The spokesman was a General or a Major-General. He gave a clear, lucid account of the Burma war, sector by sector. Questions followed. Often embarrassing questions from the press which sat at a "U"-shaped table, sipping tea and munching locally-made biscuits. It was a full complement of the press in Chungking, including Chinese journalists, representatives of the Russian News Agency, *Tass*, younger men from the legations and the two censors. The presence of the censors at the press conferences was important, because it avoided later any clash between the press and the censors. If the military spokesman had conceded a point, the censor could then let it pass in the messages. The spokesman had to be interpreted, and he illustrated every move with the help of a hand-drawn map. On the four walls of this room in which the press conferences were held, were pictures of former correspondents who had at sometime or other visited Chungking. It was a galaxy of journalistic and literary talent. I could recognize a few—Edgar Mowrer, Edgar Snow, Vincent Sheen, Jacoby, Beldon and so many others.

After the conference I went over to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, as always, it had to be done walking, because a chair or a rickshaw was not so easily obtainable for men of my size. A lift in a car

is very rare. I am told that sometime ago when petrol could be got in the Black Market, it would cost something like Rs. 70/- a gallon. To-day you could not buy it for love or money. Mr. Shao, Director of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was the man to whom I carried a letter of introduction. Wherever I have been in Chungking, I have been greeted with the words "We welcome you." It is typical of the kindness and hospitality of a people whose culture goes far back into the ages. I also felt quite early after my arrival that my presence here as an Indian journalist —the first of my kind—had some significance for the Chinese people. At least, they made me believe that they felt so. At the moment, I am the only Indian in Chungking and will be till Zafrulla Khan comes here to steal my thunder. When I came back to the hostel three journalists from the *Central Daily News* were waiting for me wanting an interview. They wanted to know something about India and the Cripps mission. Already this morning, the boys at the Hostel have been ragging me about my appearance in the local English Daily which is a cyclostyled affair in double spacing. Shortage of paper had made it necessary that even the most important news should appear in single space. The last time anything appeared in double space was the announcement of the outbreak of the Pacific War. So that my appearance in double spacing was the cause of much entertainment and amusement to the gang. But even so I refused to believe that it was a mistake, for everything that has

happened in China seems to make me believe that the people here are making a special effort to be particularly kind to a representative from India.

Forman was broadcasting on his N. B. C. network to his twenty million and I went to hear him put over his two minutes and also to see the Radio Station from where I would be broadcasting myself. XGOY, the Chinese International Station, is a one-man show, which seems to achieve so much. This one man is Mr. Peng Lou Sou. The boys call him "Lousy" Peng, which is intended and taken as a term of endearment. Lousy is like the leaning Tower of Pisa and more so now in his traditional gown to which he has been reduced in clothing after an unfortunate theft of his suits from his house. He has a strong American accent and like the radio beam of XGOY, he always looks Americawards. For America he gets up at all odd hours of the morning. From America too, he gets quick reports and great encouragement. Lousy told me that the only radio in the world which sometimes ignored his correspondence and his requests for a report on reception conditions was the All-India Radio. I heard him that night ask N. B. C. for a reception report on Forman's broadcast. Harrison got a phone call two hours later in which Lousy told him that the broadcast had been given a "Four".

Had dinner at 7 sharp when we got our foreign meal with a knife and fork as compared with the home or "native" meal which we eat with chopsticks midday. After dinner the card game began. They play

"hearts," a sort of lose-all-the-hearts idea. They do not play to anything more than a nominal stake because gambling is discouraged by the New Life Movement and one feels like respecting the wishes of a country in which one lives.

* * *

It was just after lunch, in one of the rooms at the press hostel, that news came through to us that the Domei Agency and the Tokyo radio had announced the first Allied bombing of Japan. We were in Spencer Moosa's room. There was a burst of activity in the hostel and we made a dash to try and get the official Chinese comment. This came from Dr. Wang Shih-Chieh, the Minister of Information, who made a very dignified and restrained comment on the news. "The news of the first Allied bombing of Tokyo and Yokohama is regarded in Chungking as a most significant development," he said, "marking the beginning of the fulfilment of the pledge announced by the American Government that the United Nations will soon bring the war to Japan proper. Besides the material damage caused by the bombing, the moral effect must be immense on the Japanese people, who have thus far been kept grossly ignorant by their militarists of Japan's vulnerability as well as the real strength of the United Nations."

This was the official reaction, which was necessarily restrained until further details were available. The people of Chungking, though naturally jubilant, remained calm and dignified. As the news reached the people

in the streets, who read it on posters with large lettering, there was just a little chatter and conversation and comment, and then they passed on their way again, back to their work. There were no demonstrations as one would have expected from a people who had been bombed for four solid years. I felt as if they were saying to themselves : "The war effort must go on and the bombing of Tokyo is just a little detail." They were not interested so much in the source of the bombers, as in the fact that their destination was reached and that it had at long last been brought home to Japan that its turn had now come to take it and like it, even as the Chinese people had patiently taken it so long.

My observations, however, differed from those of some of the other boys who sent out more colourfu messages in which they described rickshaw coolies abandoning their rickshaws to sing in chorus in the middle of the street and how in order to give vent to their feelings, the people of China paid frequent visits to the toddy shops. I will not say that these observations were incorrect. I will merely say that I never saw the jubilance that I expected and I was glad to see that even when so important an event as the bombing of Tokyo was announced, the Chinese did not get any sadistic pleasure out of it. Bombing has to be done in World War II, but it is only as a military necessity and not as something to be gloated over. Moreover, as I came from a country whose people had not yet known bombing, I felt a little

hesitant about rejoicing in the misfortune of another, if even an enemy, country.

As we listened in to the Japanese radio, we noticed how out of breath the announcers seemed to have got. Japanese announcers appeared so excited and nervous, which was an indication of the moral effect of which the Chinese Minister of Information at Chungking had spoken. It seemed to those of us who were listening in to Tokyo that the Tokyo radio which had hitherto been so boastful and confident had had a nervous breakdown. Announcers seemed to scramble back to the microphones from air-raid shelters, frightened out of their wits.

Perhaps the boys of the press gang here at Chungking were the most demonstrative, because after so much depressing news in the past which they have had to cover, this was the first big Allied news, for which they had patiently waited. Four hundred and fifty dollars were raised from subscriptions from the press gang from which fireworks were purchased and blown up in the compound of the hostel that night. The boys were feeling much lighter than they had felt for a long time.

There is a lot of speculation about the source of the bombers over Tokyo. Although the feeling in Chungking is that they must have come ex carriers, it is curious to know that enquiries received here from the U. S. suggest the possibility of this raid having been carried out from some secret base in China. This however, appears to be just speculation. Japanese

reports on the air raid are as conflicting as Japanese reports usually are. According to one Japanese report, the planes were American and were flying at a height of 30,000 ft. A later Japanese report said that there was something wrong with this statement, because if the planes were flying so high, it was better and safer from the Japanese point of view to refer to them as unidentified planes. But while these planes were flying, according to Japanese reports, at a height of 30,000 ft., the Tokyo radio felt quite comfortable referring to the "ruthlessness of the air raids" in which, according to the Japanese, one hospital and one school were bombed! Even little children in the streets, so said the Japanese, were machine-gunned!! All I can say is that if Allied planes could machine-gun little children in the streets from a height of 30,000 ft., it was pretty good shooting.

The Domei Agency tells us that the population of Japan is furious at these "atrocities"—which right now consists of the bombing of one hospital and one school and the machine-gunning of little children from a height of 30,000 ft. The Japanese people should have been informed by their spokesman of how Japanese troops had behaved in occupied territories, where Chinese children were bayoneted by Japanese troops in broad daylight. For the sake of amusement these children would be lifted in the air on the point of a bayonet by the troops of a country which speaks of a Greater Asia. I cannot think of anything more disgusting. Nor would I have believed that such

atrocities as I read about in Edgar Snow's "*Battle for Asia*" could have been committed even by the Japanese, were it not that these reports have been confirmed here by neutral observers who are not Chinese.

Let me give you Snow's first-hand account of the Nanking massacres. Snow says: "The Japanese entered Nanking on December 12th, as Chinese troops and civilians were still trying to withdraw to the north bank of the Yangtze River, debouching through the one remaining gate. Scenes of utmost confusion ensued. Hundreds of people were machine-gunned by Japanese planes or drowned while trying to cross the river; hundreds more were caught in the bottleneck which developed at Hsiakuan gate, where bodies piled up four feet high. The disintegration of authority during these last hours was inexcusable, and left many people ready to accept the Japanese occupation as a welcome "restoration of law and order."

What a disillusionment awaited them!"

And then read this grim account which Snow gives of Nanking after it fell: "The sordid story of the Nanking massacres is now pretty familiar to the world. According to an estimate given to me by members of the Nanking International Relief Committee—which was, incidentally, headed by a German business man, Mr. John H. D. Rabe, who wore Hitler's highest Nazi decoration—the Japanese murdered no less than 42,000 people in Nanking alone, a large percentage of them women and children. It is estimated that

300,000 civilians were murdered by the Japanese in their march between Shanghai and Nanking, a number roughly equal to the casualties suffered by the Chinese armed forces.

"Anything female between the ages of 10 and 70 was raped. Discards were often bayoneted by drunken soldiers. Frequently mothers had to watch their babies beheaded, and then to submit to raping. One mother told of being raped by a soldier who, becoming annoyed at the cries of her baby, put a quilt over its head, and smothered it to death, finishing his performance in peace. Some officers, who led these forays, turned their quarters into harems and fell into bed each night with a new captive. Open-air copulation was not uncommon. Some 50,000 troops in the city were let loose for over a month in an orgy of rape, murder, looting and general debauchery which has nowhere been equalled in modern times."

Much of this was corroborated in Chungking.

I remember now the words of the Japanese General, Sugiyama, who once remarked: "Some force even greater than God has inspired our men."

It frightens me.

* * *

THE more I get into the swing of work the less time I have to browse as on the first days. Details are getting fixed up and I am getting used to the routine of work. Distances take a lot of time to cover. The country sometimes reminds me of Switzerland without the snow, but with little chalets pinned on like brown

dots on the green mountainside. There are two banks of the river—as in Paris—though there is a great deal of difference between the smell of the Seine and that of the Yangtze. My predominant impression of Chungking is still of steps and more steps and narrow little by-lanes along which Chinese folk sit and sip green tea. It is something like the setting of the Casbah of Pepe le Moko in *Algiers*.

In the evening I went to a reception at Dr. Kung's residence given in honour of the A. V. G. A cosmopolitan crowd—diplomatic and official—was present. The press was of course invited. We are always regarded as privileged people. In fact we form a substantial part of the "foreign" population of the capital. Dr. Kung is the Minister of Finance and his wife is the sister of Mme. Chiang Kai Shek. Kung looks the sort of Chinaman depicted in a pantomime, his hands tucked in the sleeves of his robe, his head covered with a Chinese skull-cap, his paunch healthy and prosperous. The three Soong sisters were present. The party was slightly formal for my liking—shades of Government House. I would have preferred a more democratic touch. As a journalist I dislike being "presented." From the crowd, however, various nice, strange people cropped up and began conversation saying: "I am Mr. So-and-So." I found it impossible to get anywhere near Mme. Chiang that day though I was "presented" to Dr. Kung and General Ho Ying Chin, the Minister of War. The latter was a youngish General. The one striking "foreign" woman at the

party was an American with a New York outfit that reminded me of the Rue Royale. Paris-in-the-spring, if that could ever be found in Chungking. Dr. Kung made a speech in Chinese and then read something with difficulty in English. Mme. Chiang followed—feminine, picturesque, slightly flamboyant, Naiduesque, dramatic. She spoke of the A. V. G. as the 'Tigers of the air.' The picture which was presented to them as a souvenir on the occasion depicted eagles swooping on land and sea. The party was in the open and as darkness approached, it began to get a little chilly. I have not seen the sun since I have been here. At best, it resembles a November day in England. Grey skies all the time as if the sky too had blended with the shadow which had come with the war. Squadron leader Howard took the gift on behalf of the A. V. G. A lanky American, born in China as Dr. Kung revealed, he was "fighting not only for China but for humanity." Howard's speech was disappointing.

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THE morning was very gloomy. The Chinese paper—*Central Daily News*—published an interview of mine on the Cripps mission and on India. Describing me, it said: "......his manner was like that of a smart American but his frankness represented the character of the Indian people......" I liked the compliment. But what touched me more was that the Tass Agency had translated this interview from Chinese into Russian and cabled it to Moscow. It made me feel a little conscious of my responsibility for

what I said and did while I was here.

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It is a Sunday. I was up at eight, shaved and decided to accompany four of the boys who were going on a picnic at the invitation of some Cultural Promotion Committee to South Hot Springs. A long tramp to the ferry and then across the river to the South bank. Bus for 15 miles. The crowd from the British Attache's office had also come along. And "Lousy" Peng with his two kids of eight and six whom I have named "Penguins." Here at South Springs, I realized more than anywhere else, how much like Switzerland Chungking is. There were variations, however, because a little bit of water ran between the mountains and little row boats floated on it, primitive, picturesque—something like Venice, almost and very much like the summer on the Isis in Oxford. At the local hotel we saw a Chinese wedding—a civil marriage. I think our presence put the wedding group off their stride and as the bride walked very dignifiedly, "down the aisle," which was only in the middle of the dining-room, she got entangled in her train and "lost face" and blushed. Drank more tea. It is like glu-wine on the Swiss Alps, but I would rather have the Alpine beverage because this tea is getting a little monotonous for my pallet. Bathed and washed in the hot spring water. Lunched in the open. Some community-singing. A little discussion, because after all there had to be some culture-promoting. Then on the river towards the Central Political Institute where some 800 to 1,000

Chinese boys, the pick of youth were being trained with a view to hold office in the governments of the future.

The Political Institute is a party affair and the Generalissimo is its Chancellor. It is run by the Kuomintang which is the party in power here. A sort of permanent party-in-the-majority.

The Kuomintang dominates China to-day. It resembles in many ways a sort of paternal autocracy which has been entrusted with the destiny of China. The word "entrusted" needs qualification, because this trusteeship is in many ways self-appointed. The Kuomintang came into power with the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty. When Dr. Sun Yat-Sen founded the Republic and saw the vision of a democracy in China, he visualized also what he called the period of tutelage. The Kuomintang came in as the tutor. It is essentially a party machine and represents a combination of several interests, which are to a large extent vested interests, linked up with the military element in China. Even in the Kuomintang there are various shades of opinion—some rabidly reactionary and party conscious, some more progressive, liberal and international in outlook. But this latter faction is to-day in the minority and that is why there is less co-ordination between the Kuomintang and the Communists than there might have been had the progressive element been in the ascendant. It is my feeling that only so long as Japan remains an enemy, will the ascendancy of the Kuomintang remain undisputed. Which is an indication of the great compromise which

the Left elements have made for the purpose of presenting a united front.

The republic is the one great thing to which they all bow down. Perhaps the most sacred words in China to-day are *San Min Chu I*, which means "The Three Principles of the People." This is the very breath of China. The Three Principles, as laid down by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen in this legacy which he left to the Chinese people, have been the subject of much dispute with regard to the way in which they are to be achieved, but the principles remain fundamentally the same. They are:—

(*i*) Nationalism,
(*ii*) Democracy, and
(*iii*) Livelihood.

The interpretation of nationalism appears to present no difficulty. Nationalism stands for the full recovery in every sense of that word of the sovereign rights of the Chinese people. It implies the abolition of treaties which foreigners have imposed upon them—treaties which are obviously unfair and unequal and which have become anachronisms in a world which is moving towards democracy. It implies also the abolition of extra-territoriality which was derived from these unequal treaties. It implies the end of special, political, economic and territorial concession.

The word 'democracy' is likewise easy to interpret as an ideal, though the Kuomintang appears to have slowed down the march of events which must precede the attainment of such an ideal. Democracy means, as everywhere else in the world, that a country should be

ruled by an enfranchised people who elect their own Government. While the Kuomintang is in power it is obvious that it would like to play the role of tutor as long as it could before throwing up the government of the country to the vote of the people.

Livelihood is the one great bone of contention. It touches, as the word implies, the very life of the people and it is here that interpretations differ. Once Dr. Sun Yat-Sen answered the question, "What is the principle of livelihood" by saying : "It is Communism and it is Socialism. . . .but in China class war and the dictatorship of the proletariat are unnecessary." He envisaged a state with equal opportunity for all and elimination of exploitation through the *equalization of the land* and the ownership by society of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

But there appears to be much confusion of thought in the elucidation by Sun Yat-Sen of the principle of livelihood. At times he made you feel as if he was moving towards the Communist idea. On other occasions he has distinguished it from Marxism. It is difficult to anticipate how events will take their course. This disputed legacy will have to wait till the end of the war before it is straightened out. In the meantime it still is the *San Min Chu I* that holds China together much more than any individual ever could. It is the very theme-song of China's existence and just as the people of France used to stand to attention to the strains of the *Marseillaise* in the France before the German occupation, the people of

China to-day click their heels and stiffen their shoulders to the *San Min Chu I*. Played to music it has become the National anthem of the republic of China.

But to go back to the Central Political Institute—I was very pleased to find that the only flag in the whole place was that of the Indian National Congress, pinned on the wall of the Vice-Chancellor's office. It was given to him by Jawaharlal Nehru when the Vice-Chancellor, Taofan Chang, accompanied the Generalissimo to India. Taofan Chang very proudly showed it to me and some of the boys felt the urge to salute it.

The setting of this Political Institute was just perfect for work and philosophical thought. From its grounds on the hill you could gaze on for miles and yet see no other trace of human habitation. Nature in all its abundant glory seemed to have spread its canvas for these young men to behold. Like a Dutch painting you could see the corn in the foreground, and the green hill and dale was the canvas on which the pattern of their young lives was drawn. It is sufficiently distant from the city and yet only fifteen miles away.

We had tea in the big room. I was made much of, which makes me feel they like Indians a hell of a lot, for I was asked to sit on the right of the Vice-Chancellor which was embarrassing when there were other more senior newspapermen present. Had to make a speech—as all this is part of the Chinese idea of culture-promoting! Then to the gardens along the water. It was so much like Addison's Walk in Christ Church. Numerous bamboo trees lined the path,

whereon various visitors had carved their names. I also carved a mascot of my own and I have a hunch I will go back to this place some day. More than Chungking, it is the setting of this Institute that grips me so. It is one of the few places in the world which I have visited and want to visit again, if only for the beauty and the peace which it radiates. Perhaps I saw it on a perfect day with grey skies and a nip in the air which accentuated its quiet and its simplicity. I seemed to have got on very well with Taofan Chang for he gave me a straw coolie-hat of the Institute as a souvenir to take back with me. Back by bus lifting our voices to an assortment of songs from *Rose Marie* and about the body of the late Mr. John Brown. It began to rain a bit. Crossed the ferry and tramped again. Steps, steps, steps. I do not know how I did them—three hundred at a time, when in Bombay I could hardly do a flight of thirty without getting shockingly out of breath. At the other end of the bank we realized it was too late to go to the hostel for food, so we had a "foreign" meal at the *Daisy*. Then came the last tramp which nearly killed us. No rickshaws would carry us in the wet. One man wanted to charge thirty dollars. We jumped into a bus for a part of the way and in the crush Harrison lost his Leica. To his surprise and mine he found it the next day. Somehow there is an unbelievable honesty about these people who would rather return an expensive camera than "lose face." To bed and slept like a log.

* * *

I AM sore all over. Like having done horse-riding after a long time. Shopped in the morning. Frantic search for a laxative !

After lunch that day I went to see the Red General, Chow En-Lai. He is one of the triumvirate who dominates the Communist Party in China. I had always wanted to meet these three ever since I first read Edgar Snow's "Red Star Over China." The great Mao is not here and Chu Teh is also away. So I took the opportunity of seeing Chow as early as possible. He is one of the most picturesque and colourful characters I have met in life. In appearance he looks a Continental with slightly Chinesey eyes. He was somewhat unshaven. In his dark-blue serge suit he looked like a Paris salesman. He is young—too young to be a General, judging from the age and the fossilization of the Generals of the British Empire. He appeared to be intensely real in his outlook and when I asked him a question which I regarded as delicate or difficult, Chow would answer with perfect confidence beginning his sentence with the words : "It is clear . . ." He was at Sian when the Generalissimo was taken prisoner and one of those responsible for inducing the Young Marshal to release him and to effect a compromise in the greater interests of the country. One of the questions I put to Chow was : "What is there in Chiang Kai Shek taht made the Communists unite under him after having fought him so long and succeeded in making him your prisoner ?" After all, remember the background of Sian and the way Chiang Kai Shek

had ordered to be shot down some of the leaders of this same Communist Party of which he was then a prisoner. What was the psychological factor in this miracle at Sian—was it the greatness of Chiang Kai Shek or was it the generous greatness of the Reds? And Chow answered: "It is very clear..." and it almost made me smile. His explanation of the Communist point of view and of the happenings at Sian threw a new light and a new angle on the whole problem of China, for I realized then that there was a great sincerity in this Leftist element in China, which allowed it to be big enough to co-operate with and work under the very man whom they had fought and whom they had made a virtual prisoner. Chow said very candidly that they saw in the Generalissimo at that time the only chance China had of uniting as a nation to resist the Japanese aggressor. As I listened to Chow, I felt certain that though the Generalissimo is responsible for so much good that has come to China, history and posterity will some day give to the Red Army some of the credit of this war of resistance against Japan. In answer to another question about the Generalissimo, Chow described him as essentially a militarist in his outlook and a disciplinarian in his methods. It was the soldier in Chiang Kai Shek that dominated the politician and even the statesman. I asked him a number of questions some of which I need not repeat now but in one I asked: "What sacrifice had the Communists made to bring about this compromise at Sian?" Chow said that they desisted from

confiscating the land of the landlords! It was *Das Kapital* of Karl Marx speaking chapter and verse. "We stopped fighting the Kuomintang," Chow said, "because from that stage onwards we were to fight side by side against Japan." Chow felt that the Communist attitude in China precipitated the fight against Japan and when Japan saw the possibility of the civil war coming to an end, Japan began the declared war, which had hitherto been undeclared.

When I think what might have happened had China and Japan come to terms instead of having fought for two years before war broke out in Europe, I shudder to think of the consequences. So that men like Chow En-Lai, Mao Tse Tung and Chu Teh and the Red Army and Sian may be regarded as a turning point in the history of this world. Chow is a sort of ambassador-in-inverted-commas in Chungking of the Red Army, now called the Eighth Route Army, since the Red Army as such does not exist. I thought China would benefit more if there was more co-operation between men like Chow and the party in power. This was an idea expressed in a broadcast from Chungking when I was pleasantly surprised that from a broadcast on so controversial a matter only one sentence was cut out by the censors. It was the bit where I drew attention to a postscript in the Generalissimo's diary of the fortnight in Sian where I said I found to my amusement the word "Communists" was explained in the footnote as meaning "bandits"!

Chow is a very unusual Red, very calm and patient,

never ruffled—unike some Communists in other parts of the world ! But his soul appeared to be perpetually restless. The more I talked to him the more I began to realize how compromise was necessary in life and it served as a pointer to me for the solution of the internal and communal problems of India. Chow is sincere—of that there is no doubt in my mind. He is also one of the most sympathetic persons I have met for quite a long time. He is very humble and this is a great quality. He is gallant like a well-bred Frenchman. Every time I got him to speak on the relative position of the Communists and the Kuomintang, he always gave me a very balanced view of the whole position. I noticed more than once that he spoke of the other side with deference and great respect. I tried to provoke him with difficult questions, but he was always restrained in his answer and emphasized time and again that it was because of the country as a whole that they must stand united. "Not only now," he said, "but also when the war is over." Then he paused and added : "...if that is possible." It is because of the determination of these Reds that the civil war in China will remain abated at least till the war against Japan is over, that I have faith in China's sincerity to resist. This truce will certainly last through the war, but God alone knows how things will shape in China after that. Much depends on how the Generalissimo will shape. I asked Chow why it was that the Generalissimo was the hero of China. Chow unhesitatingly replied : "Because he has led the fight

against Japan." That was a significant answer, for to that extent Chiang Kai Shek was a hero also in the eyes of the Communists. Differences of opinion arose only when the reactionary Kuomintang element came into play. As the "Generalissimo," the Communists admired Chiang Kai Shek intensely. As the head of the Kuomintang there arose between him and the Communists differences of opinion which were strongly marked. Which is bound to be—because the Kuomintang and the Communists stand for two entirely different and mutually exclusive economic and political systems. Even to-day the reactionary element in the Kuomintang where it has been able to prevail on the Generalissimo has effected a virtual blockade of the Eighth Route Army which is holding one of the fronts of China against the Japanese. This blockade prevents help of any kind from reaching the Eighth Route Army and I have it on the authority of very reliable neutral parties—not Chinese—that even a consignment of medical supplies was stopped from reaching the Eighth Route Army by the present Minister of War, General Ho Ying Chin. Ho Ying Chin is a Kuomintang die-hard and is to the Red Army what Mr. Amery is to India. But in spite of this and in spite of the fact that some of the best Chinese forces are virtually "keeping guard" over their Communist brethren and thus rendering themselves unavailable for action against Japanese forces, in spite of the fact that the Eighth Route Army gets no military help from the Chinese Government in the shape of ammunition

and what little financial help it got after Sian has now been stopped, it has not weakened one jot the determination of Red China that no Japanese soldier shall tread on their motherland. And that is a very remarkable fact. It is awe-inspiring to see how two such opposing forces have under such dramatic conditions come to fight side by side and shoulder to shoulder against a common enemy.

I asked Chow about India and what he felt India should do in view of the breakdown of the negotiations and the unsatisfactory conditions in which we found ourselves politically. And Chow expressed the opinion that if the national element in India were to fight and "get armed" it would become "a fact" even as the various divisions of the Red Army had become facts. This was essentially a Marxist way of looking at things. Of course Chow prefaced his remark by saying: "It is very clear..."

Chow was delighted that Jawaharlal had mentioned the idea of organizing guerrillas. An expert in this kind of warfare himself, he saw in it great possibilities in a large country like India, where, as General Wavell had said, it would not be possible to guard so large a coastline by the old method of traditional warfare. If the idea of guerrilla warfare caught on in India Chow felt that the defence of India would become really great and this fighting spirit would spread like wild-fire and strike the imagination of the people as a whole.

Chow is very friendly. That is why I like him.

He lives in a typical underground sort of place, as if it was part of the atmosphere of the party which he represents. He has a great sense of humour. And as I said, he hardly looks a General, but Red Generals come like that I suppose. In the midst of much serious talk we joked as I have never done with a Communist before. I asked him silly questions, like how he managed to become a General so young and he would laugh and say that all he had to do was to shave off his hair. All Generals in China have shaven heads. He added : "When you become the leader of guerrillas fighting the Japanese I will call you General too." But he never told me whether it would necessitate a shaven head ! Chow wanted to see me again and I think he meant it. He will fix up the time and the day and he wanted me to go over to his office in the village on the hill and have lunch with some of the boys.

It was altogether a great experience.

* * *

At the press conference Dr. Wang Shih-Chieh, the Minister of Information, appeared particularly elated at the unification of the South West Pacific Command under General MacArthur. Dr. Wang said : "It has given no less gratification to China than to those United Nations whose forces were placed under General MacArthur's direction." The enthusiasm at the appointment of MacArthur as supreme commander comes not only from official quarters but also from the local press. The *Sin Min Pao,* a Chinese vernacular

paper says: "With MacArthur at the head of affairs, a new dawn will soon come to the darkened Pacific arena." During the week I have been here I have noticed repeated references to the need for such unification, not only regional unification, but also a general Allied unification. Said the Minister for Information: "In order that the various regional commands of the United Nations may achieve the best results, some central machinery with adequate possibilities to effect unification of strategy of the Allied forces as a whole appears to be still needed."

This was not the first time that reference had been made by China to the need for unification of strategy as a whole. To-day's press conference only re-echoed this recurrent but restrained official hope. I had already heard it expressed unofficially by not a few high-placed persons. We have hitherto looked upon the war in China as something extraneous to us. We have been interested in Burma only because it threatened a frontier of India. But if we are to make a substantial contribution to this war, we have to begin to think in terms of China as part of Allied territory, and of Burma, which is fast disappearing, as the heart-line and life-line of China. I have seen British *communiques* stressing the way they held on to the Irawadi front while the Chinese were being pushed back on the road to Lashio. Likewise, since I have been here, I have noticed one Chinese *communique* say that it "rescued" a British column or division. This hardly appears to me to be the way to fight as

Allies in a world war. It is the result of the divisions of commands and strategy at a time when there should be a unified command of all fronts. I cannot help feeling that all *communiques* should read in terms of "Allied" advances and "Allied" retreats. There should be a desire to share victory and share defeat, to share men and ammunition and materials according to the urgency of the need in any particular sector. And if we are to achieve anything in the Far East we must begin to think of this war as a whole and not as different wars against the Japanese.

Questioned by one of the members of the press, the military spokesman who followed Dr. Wang Shih-Chieh, revealed that the fighting in Burma was under the British High Command. So there is no change on this point as we had been led to believe by press reports alleged to have emanated from Chungking. Reviewing the fighting in Burma during the last week, the spokesman said that more fierce battles were to be expected in the very near future. Very tactfully he gave us the cue that there were not adequate air reinforcements. The way he put it, however, was: "Such hard-fighting forces as well as the troops of our British Ally, who have been hard pressed even longer by the enemy *certainly deserve succour in the form of prompt and adequate air reinforcements*." The press gang is too shrewd to miss a point like that.

Two big statements have come from India. They have been given ample space in the local press. General Wavell's speech which was rebroadcast from Chung-

king, chiefly to ensure that it would be heard in America, was listened to in Chungking with great interest. At the time when it was thought that the Japanese had landed in Akyab, well-informed Chinese circles believed that the next objective of the Japs would be to effect such a landing somewhere in India. There was a more optimistic view taken of this since Tokyo had been bombed. But after General Wavell's broadcast last night in which he has referred to such an attempt at landing having been made by the enemy in India, Chinese circles feel more assured about the dangers of such a landing, especially in view of General Wavell's statement that India is prepared for such an eventuality.

Extracts from the speech made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at Calcutta have been received here with even greater enthusiasm. There is great optimism arising from the Pandit's remark that 'embarrassing the war effort would amount to helping the enemy.' Jawaharlal's speech is interpreted here as a vigorous call to resistance against Japanese aggression. In a broadcast this morning to America, James L. Stewart, speaking for the Columbia Broadcasting System, referred to Jawaharlal's speech and said to his country: "This note of straightforward realism on the part of the greatest individual leader of the Indian people is good news in Chungking." Guerrilla warfare, it is pointed out here, if well-organized can play a great part in World War II and it is felt that conditions in India would be particularly suitable for offering this

type of resistance to the enemy. General Wavell's broadcast seems to confirm that opinion.

* * *

Got up late this morning as I worked late last night. The sun has come out and it's getting warmer. In the evening I strolled out with Wilkie to Chialing House, the only little hotel in this capital of China. As we walked up the hill a little Chinese girl aged about six, who crossed us on the road, stopped and bowed to us. We were taken aback at this gesture and so Wilkie, who was in the khaki uniform of an Australian war correspondent, saluted the little lady and I bent particularly low to bow. We never understood why she bowed to us at all. Had tea at Chialing House and talked in the large, barren, empty room, where the only other person was a European woman, very much in a delicate condition. We talked about many things and at times I felt I was doing some loud thinking myself, clarifying my position with regard to the war. Everything is so confusing. First the breakdown of the Cripps mission and its aftermath. I feel Cripps said a little too much in his interview at Karachi which should have been better left unsaid, whether he was justified in saying it or not. Such a pity.

Wilkie asked me, as have so many others here, how I reconciled my two conflicting loyalties. It is sometimes a difficult question to answer. We stood for a long while on the terrace of Chialing House looking down at the river curving through the valley with little boats, like gondolas, paddling on its placid

waters. From high up I could see little dots move, which were Chinese boatmen and labourers, bent and trudging and pulling heavy loads, which were probably of rice and munitions, and transporting them from one part of China to another, because shortage of petrol had made transport difficult. And I kept watching these little dots move, these dots which were once the flesh and blood of China, but which in five long years had become skin and bone, knowing only blood, sweat, toil and tears and I turned round and said to Wilkie: "Somehow I cannot take my vengeance on humanity, because I bear a grudge to a handful of Englishmen." That is how I am beginning to feel more and more.

Around six we got up to go and my eyes fell on the sunset between the mountains at the end of the winding river. The Chialing met the Yangtze a little further away. The Chungking grey was coming on after a hot day. It was perfect as I looked at it and looked down again on the little river boats clustered together and gliding gently on the still waters. All I could do was to whistle *Le Bateau des Iles*. It meant so much to me. Around the hills you would see the bombed houses sprinkled sparsely over the green-grey. Sometimes a car could be seen on the winding road far away. The world stood still for a few minutes, paying homage to the setting sun. We walked home, buying eggs which, when hard boiled, constitute a special bite late at night with a glass of vodka which we sometimes consume.

I have had no news from anyone yet. Sometimes one feels kind of lonesome here, cut off from the rest of the world. How grim the outlook must be for some of the other boys who will be here for the duration. I got my badge for the dug-out attached to the Press Hostel. Although one can go freely into any public dug-out, in order to avoid over-crowding in the private dug-outs such as that of the Ministry to which we were attached, little badges are issued which we wear pinned on to our coats. The systematic way in which every little detail is done in Chungking impresses me so much, and I doubt whether a country could have stood intensive bombing for four whole seasons without perfect organization of this kind.

One of the more interesting phases of war-time China is the work done by the ARP. With 117 air raids on its score-board, Chungking can be regarded as one of the most-bombed cities of World War II. There has not been a raid here since October of last year, and though the bombing season appeared to have started the other day, Chungking itself remains free from bombing this year up to the present time. But there is never a moment when the watch is relaxed, never a day when the organization slackens. Every night and every day you can hear the blasting that goes on, which makes more and more dug-outs under the mountains and perfects those that already exist. A certain dug-out here can take as many as 7,000 people. The man who is responsible for this brilliant organization of air raid precautions is the

young and energetic Princeton-returned Mayor, K. C. Wu. He looks to me barely forty and has been Mayor for some 10 years, which shows the part comparatively young men are allowed to play in public life in war-time China. It also proves to me that war requires young blood for the shouldering of arduous responsibilities and for the bringing into operation of new and dynamic methods, such as only young and energetic men can visualize. In an interview I had with this young Mayor of war-time Chungking, Wu told me that it was because of co-operation of the people that he was able to bring his ARP almost to a standard of perfection. After the early bombing in which people took chances and neglected to carry out instructions to the letter, the people themselves soon realized that it was in their own interest to avail themselves of the facilities afforded by the State and to get organized. That is the secret of Chungking's survival and of the morale of its people.

So perfect is the system of spotting raiders that almost as soon as Japanese planes take off towards this city, a warning is sounded. A sign is put up on the hill which indicates the nature of this danger. Almost immediately people start making for their shelters, if they have a special shelter near by. They bundle up a few of their belongings and put them in the open to avoid their catching fire in case they come within range of incendiary bombs, then they trickle into the dug-outs without panic or confusion, taking

with them their women and children. The signs continually change to indicate the nearness of the danger, and when the urgent is sounded the people have already settled down in the shelters. Quietly they sit for the period of the bombing, without talking and without any signs of panic or confusion except the occasional crying of a frightened child. But as a rule they tell me that even the children are untouched by the thud of the bombs falling and the Chinese themselves contrive to fall asleep in the dug-outs, so confident have they become of their dug-outs. Government officials nowadays take their work in with them so as not to waste time !

When the raid is over and the all-clear sounded, the people come out of the dug-outs and go about their business. They often wonder whether their home has been the unlucky one to have been hit, or whether it has been lucky enough to have had a near miss.

Because of the Chinese family system, none of your family, however remotely related, can be left stranded by you, if his or her home was bombed. It would be your duty to give such unfortunate people a roof and even clothes and food till they can find their home and belongings again.

There are some 20,000 volunteer workers in Chungking, who come into action immediately after an air-raid. Also some 800 regular paid-workers. Their work is to see that the wounded if any are promptly attended to. First Aid is given and the wound is hygienically attended to. Then almost

immediately the victim is sent to a hospital for further treatment. There is a whole squad of workers whose duty it is to see that the streets are cleaned forthwith and the debris of bombed houses carried away and order is restored. Each district has its batch of workers. They are drawn from all walks of life—shopkeepers, government servants, workers, labourers. But it is almost a duty incumbent on every man to help his fellow men at a time like this. And somehow the Chinese have not got to be told this. All I can say is that the war against Japan has brought the common man of China very close to his countryman. It is altogether an awe-inspiring sight.

* * *

HAD a cold shower this morning as the bath-room —the one and only community-bath—was occupied when I wanted it. For a hot bath at this hostel there is an extra charge. A month ago when it was still very cold, it used to cost as much as eight dollars, which is about one rupee eight annas. Now it takes less fuel to heat a bath and so we are charged only three dollars and fifty cents! The cold shower was to be had in the garden—enclosed by four planks of wood for the sake of privacy!! But it was open at the top and the sun shone on you from above. The place is a locality of washing women, who seem to get a particular delight seeing me scrub myself waist-upwards. The water was cold as hell, even though it was warming up. But I prefer it to be cold and grey, because the sun and the dust spoil the sombre

drabness of this place. At noon I pattered towards the town—downtown which was about three miles—with friends for a meal at the *Kwan Sen Yuen,* the posh eating-house of the capital. Chinese restaurants in Bombay, however humble, are probably better-looking, but here this is the best and it should be, for the meal cost—for four of us—two hundred Chinese dollars. Forty rupees! We ate sweet-and-sour pork, sweet-and-sour fish, noodles and mushrooms and the usual Chinese fare. We had to tramp a good bit of the way because rickshaw coolies were not too keen on taking us.

On my way back I called on a Chinese girl in hospital whose name had been given to me as one of the more enlightened young women of China. She had been in that hospital some five months and so I arrived with a bunch of carnations for some one I had never seen. This girl has been with the Eighth Route Army in the North of China and I knew she could tell me better than many others how guerrillas fight, what hardships there were in the North and so much which I could never get from official sources. So I got myself taken to her. Walking through the streets was grim. Whole localities had been bombed. I could see houses half blown out, but still occupied, looking silly. Shopkeepers there were galore. Stink—plenty of it—an odd assortment of odours. Children washed in the muddy water of a pool on the road. Occasionally, a little kid would lift up its *kurta* and relieve itself in the middle of the pavement. Rickshaws broken and bent,

their pullers, emaciated. Tattered clothes and sweat. Now and again a rouged modern Chinese girl in an adaptation of the traditional gown and high-heeled slippers.

I passed a curious shop which made paper boxes in which according to an old Chinese custom they buried the dead—boxes of all shapes and sorts symbolizing what you wanted the deceased to have in heaven. So if you felt that the dead man would like to have a house in heaven, you buried him in a paper house. If you wanted that he should have money in after life, you buried him in artificial banknotes. It was a custom still in force among the lower classes. Frankly, right when I wanted to be buried in a car, my God, I had missed a car here. Or I would not even have minded being buried in a tin of 555 or Craven 'A'!

So we strolled along to the hospital. It was very close to the British Embassy along a dirty little street that goes downhill. It was so like the narrow streets of Malta. The hospital itself was half blown out, but we found our way up the first floor. It was a municipal hospital and free. The girl I went to see was sharing a room with a little kid. Her name was Kung Peng. She spoke English very well. She was full of vitality and had the sort of face which is portrayed in pictures of the Soviet women of to-day. She was not the paint-and-lip-rouge kind and to my surprise I found her reading Jawaharlal's autobiography and trying to write a review in Chinese of *The Grapes of Wrath*. Very soon a nurse came in and took

the patient's temperature. The atmosphere was so grim and depressing—too depressing for my liking. This girl, Kung Peng, has lived with the toughest fighting forces and has done so much real work in the shape of organizing for the Eighth Route Army and in helping its leaders like Chow En-Lai and Mao and Chu Teh with secretarial work. She just longed to be able to get away from the hospital and move about. In two weeks if she does not get a temperature again, she said, she would be allowed to move. She had worn one uniform—one solitary garment for two years when she was at the front, "but now," she said with a twinkle in her eye, "I have got a summer dress."

"A" summer dress, mind you. Just one and she seemed so pleased about it. I do not know what made me take flowers to a complete stranger, but, believe me, I felt good taking them, though I confess I looked an odd sight with a bunch of carnations in the streets of Chungking. Already I am an object of curiosity here.

We talked for nearly an hour when I heard something of what war has meant to China. I remember reading in one of these pamphlets I picked up somewhere here a little passage which I copied. I remembered it again as I listened to Kung Peng. The passage read: "Suffering and misery are the conditions of war; in this age of bitter inhumanity one is apt to listen with chill disinterest to fresh tales of horror. But this disinterest is directly measured by one's

distance from the scene of violence. One cannot live in China and feel and think without being moved to action. The cold fact that China has 6,000,000 homeless refugees may mean little until one sees these gaunt, hungering people dragging themselves over thousands of dusty paths. The fact that a Japanese bombing may kill 4,000 people in a day means nothing until one hears flames roar, bombs thud, and sees the horrid outcome of the meeting of human flesh and steel shrapnel. China's 100,000 war orphans are only a phrase until one looks into the questioning eyes of a parentless child and feels the clutch of its hand as it seeks comfort. In such suffering as this China has found its sphere of action."

* * *

SOMEHOW these Reds fascinate me. Often, going through *Red Star over China* and the *Battle for Asia*, I would stop reading Snow's brilliant sketches of Mao Tse-Tung and Chu Teh and Chow En-Lai and turn over the pages to look at their pictures. Those piercing eyes of Mao, that doggone handsome face of Chu Teh, that continental look of Chow En-Lai, I found drawing me towards them. From all reports in China, Mao is by far the greatest of them—a man of tomorrow. Coupled with his realism he has an almost uncanny intuitive sense. Much of what he has said has come true even against all expectations. He seems to think and talk not in terms of China but of the world. He reasons with a simplicity which, at first, seems too good to be true. His analysis of the reasons

that led to the Russo-German pact and of the alignment of such forces as Communism and Fascism in the early stages of this world war, seemed very far-fetched at the time he gave them. Later events, however, have proved that Russia's alignment with Germany was, as Mao had said, a strategic move to prevent and forestall an alignment against Russia of Nazi Germany and the ruling class of Britain. Mao saw through Munich and appeasement as clearly as did the Soviets, while the rest of the world misjudged it completely. That so much common sense should emerge from a peasant leader, untrained in the recognized schools of political thought, is an indication of the outlook and the fitness of the Red leaders of China in a world in which traditional and ancestral leadership has hopelessly failed to judge and appraise correctly the significance of some of the great social, political and military upheavals of our time.

And then again you have this completely inexplicable attitude of compromise which the Reds have effected in China and you begin to ask yourselves whether in reality the Reds are turning soft and pink. What is Red China heading for ? Will this abatement of the internal conflict and of class war affect the progress of socialism in China ? These are some of the questions every intelligent observer is bound to want to ask and want answered. One has to go back to the Father of Communism, Lenin, who said : "There is not, at the present time, any other means of bringing socialism nearer than by complete political liberty, a

democratic republic..." Snow had asked Mao the question: "Many people now assert that the Chinese Communists are in fact no longer social revolutionaries but mere reformists. How do you answer them ?Do you still maintain that the Chinese revolution is 'anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, with the possibility of transformation, at a certain stage, into socialist revolution,' and that the responsibility of the Communist Party is to lead the nation toward that revolution ?"

"We are always social revolutionaries," Mao replied, "and we are never reformists. There are two main objectives in the thesis of the Chinese revolution· The first consists of the realization of the tasks of a national democratic revolution. The other is social revolution. The latter must be achieved, and completely achieved. For the present the revolution is national and democratic in character, but after a certain stage it will be transformed into social revolution. The present 'becoming' of the social revolutionary part of the thesis of the Chinese revolution will turn into its 'being'—unless our work in the present phase is a failure, in which case there is no early possibility of social revolution." Mao had also said that in the present stage of the revolution, the problem of primary importance is resistance to Japanese imperialism. Anti-feudal tasks may for a while be subordinated to the major anti-Japanese issue. Their anti-feudal programme in this period consists of demands of nation-wide democracy and the improvement of the peoples' livelihood.

I must quote again from Edgar Snow because he has taught me such a lot. Snow answers my question about the destination of Communism in China, which has compromised with so reactionary a party as the Kuomintang. Snow puts it thus in the *Battle for Asia* :

"While admitting the fact that the Kuomintang, which they call the 'party of the landlords, capitalists and compradors,' now holds the national power, the Communists do not recognize its leadership of the main stream of the Chinese revolution. This, they believe, belongs to the peasants and workers—over whom they themselves claim 'hegemony.' When the leadership of the national power in the Government coincides with the leadership of the working class, then the tasks of the national democratic revolution will be quickly accomplished, they believe. The struggle for leadership thus continues now during the united front as in the past during civil war, and as it shall in the democratic republic, if realized."

There is also Wang Chia-Hsiang's explanation to be found in the publication *San Min Chu I* versus Communism :

"The Communists will never abandon their ideals and the theories of Marxism and Leninism...The whole program of the Chinese Communist Party consists of two parts : (1) the maximum program, for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of socialism, and for radical emancipation through the elimination of classes ; (2) the minimum immediate program of the national democratic revolution...In

order to realize socialism, the Chinese proletariat *must first of all secure the emancipation of the Chinese nation* ...The Three Peoples' Principles are the program for this period of national emancipation and democracy."

What does baffle me, however, is why an outstanding man like Chiang Kai Shek cannot come closer to these very real people and how he can prefer some of the milk-and-water element of the Kuomintang Party. I cannot also understand how the Generalissimo in his diary of the fortnight in Sian can refer to them as bandits, when in so much that the Reds have done, they have revealed themselves as a very well disciplined, large-hearted and generous lot. I was surprised to read the eight disciplinary rules which the Reds follow in their work among the civilian population. The soldiers of the Red Army and of the *Balu Chun* (the Eighth Route Aimy) sing them on the march :

1. Secure the owner's permission before entering a house and see that all is well before you leave it ;
2. Keep the house clean ;
3. Be courteous and helpful to the people ;
4. Return all borrowed articles ;
5. Replace all damaged goods ;
6. Be honest, pay for everything you buy at market price ;
7. Be sanitary, dig latrines a safe distance from people's home ;
8. Do not kill or rob the captives.

Somehow this hardly seems a bandit song unless these bandits are like those few romantic figures in the chequered history of the ancient world, who robbed the rich to feed the poor.

Just as I have faith in China as a whole and believe in its eventual survival against stronger forces, so too have I learnt to have faith in these men who are not yet known to the world, but who will undoubtedly play a great part in shaping the future of their country after the war is over.

* * *

FROM the hospital I walked up the hill, when I noticed a man face downwards who was not there before. He was dead and so he was put out on the street on a straw mattress. It was a horrible sight and I felt a cold chill down my spine at the crude way in which he was allowed to lie in the open street. And someone who was walking with me remarked : "That's China, hardened after four and a half years of bitter fighting. And he will remain there till someone comes to pick him up. Maybe today. Maybe tomorrow." In the meantime I saw little children playing around the corpse and life in the street going on as if nothing really important had happened. I walked at some distance away from the pavement where he lay, partly out of respect for the dead and partly because I shudder at corpses. But the people of Chunking walked passed him as closely as we pass the living on the road. I suppose no one worries, after the number of dead that China has known in this war and of the dead they have seen

on the streets because of the bombing. Chungking certainly throws a different light on life. For how can I forget all this which I have seen ? When I left for China I did wonder whether in view of enemy action in the vicinity something would go wrong and I would not be able to get back safe. It was not a feeling of being frightened so much as a feeling of wanting to be careful. But it seems silly now. One life is so insignificant in the midst of those million others which are being put out as we would a candle with our bare fingers.

Back to the hostel feeling a little grim.

* * *

TONIGHT I had a special broadcast in which I introduced some of the boys who spoke on various phases of China and the war. If I have learnt anything of China during my short visit to Chungking, I also owe a lot to those foreign correspondents some of whom have known China for many years. Much of what I have learnt from them has formed the background of what I see now. These men may be regarded as seasoned observers, and theirs were personal reactions to China and its war from different angles and different points of view.

My first guest was Colin MacDonald of the *London Times*. MacDonald has been in China for over 20 years and seen the war from the beginning. This was what MacDonald said :

"Most of us speaking to you from Chungking tonight have been in China since the day the Japanese,

inspired by the greed of conquest, invaded this ancient land. For nearly five years we have recorded the day-to-day events in China's epic fight against aggression. We have seen the Chinese, undaunted by the savagery of the attack, fighting, often with little more than their bare hands, in defence of their homes. When the Japanese swarmed into China, they believed that the war would be over in five months. With the weight of metal heavily in their favour, they thought only in terms of tanks, planes and guns. We who have seen every phase of the struggle—at Shanghai, at Nanking, at Hankow and today at Chungking—can testify to their error. We can testify to the heroic qualities of the Chinese people which have brought them through the manifold perils of the past five years. Everyone recognizes today that China's fight against aggression was the beginning of the present great struggle for world freedom. The Chinese who have never once lost faith in themselves are more confident today than ever of victory for the United Nations. Those of us here tonight who have shared, if only in a small way, the dangers which the Chinese have overcome in defence of their country know that this confidence is not misplaced. The lesson which China has to offer to India—to the world—is the lesson that you cannot defeat a country which refuses to admit defeat. Here in China's war-scarred capital, we look forward to writing the last chapter of the war which we have so far recorded and the first chapter of the peace in which we shall live in security, freedom and plenty."

That was Colin MacDonald of the *London Times*. My next guest was Robert P. Martin of the United Press of America. Martin escaped from Shanghai on 26th December last year—one of the six foreigners who had escaped from Shanghai since the outbreak of the Pacific war. Escorted by Chinese guerrillas, he came through three major Japanese lines in a sampan and on foot. This was what Martin said:

"MacDonald has already commented on the war that has been raging for nearly five years in China and which many of us have covered for our newspaper readers throughout the world. The story of that war is not yet finished—as a matter of fact the best story is yet to be written—on the re-entry of Chinese troops into Nanking and the stationing of Allied troops in Tokyo.

"All of us believe firmly in the victory of the United Nations. We know that it will be many months and will take many bloody struggles to win the war. Occasionally we see a more hopeful immediate turn in our fortunes, as for example, the recent bombing raid on Tokyo, and the brilliant raid on the Philippines by American planes based in Australia. We know that American warplanes and war materials and American fighting men are arriving in Australia and India. We know that someday this accumulated power will be enough to force the Japanese to abandon, one by one, the areas they have occupied in the Pacific.

"But all this potential military power is not enough. In America I have watched football teams

score victories over far more powerful opponents by sheer brilliant play but more so because they possessed what is called fighting spirit. Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek calls this, in terms of the war—spiritual mobilization. It is a difficult attitude to define. But taken in a broad outline it means that there is a spirit that cannot be defeated and a willingness to utilize all available strength until victory is won.

"We have seen that spirit in China and we believe that it is developing in America. There are other sections of the world, not yet conquered by the Axis powers, where hesitation rather than willingness to face the fact of ultimate aggression prevents unity of purpose and work. We in China have seen what the cost is that one pays in order to continue resistance. But there are few who do not believe it was worth the price. That is the message that we try to put into our despatches, whether the news is good or whether it is bad."

That was Robert P. Martin of the United Press of America. My next guest was an Australian war correspondent—Douglas Wilkie of the Australian Newspaper Service which includes the *Melbourne Herald* and the *Sydney Sun*. Wilkie knows Manchukuo, Soviet Russia and China. He has covered Singapore and consequently seen a large number of the fights in Malaya and Java. This was what Wilkie said :

"As an Australian I think I can summarize Australia's especial regard for China. Until recently Australians knew very little about China. Not much

more than they are now encouraged to know about India. But they learned to recognize that China was actively, heroically, resisting fascism for four years while the rest of the democratic world was slave to appeasement. They recognized that China's stand against Japan was based on realism, that her success in carrying on the struggle was the result of translating the principles of realism into everyday practice. Australians admire realism and the practical as much as anyone, and more than most. They have seen how China's realism enabled her to achieve political and military unity by compromise. Here in Chungking we see how the Chinese have arranged also a working compromise between the Old China and the New China, wherever such compromise serves the national effort. It is one of the most fascinating facets of life in Free China, this compromise between Old and New. On the one hand we see a people socially organized and spiritually fortified for modern totalitarian war, able to build a nationwide co-operative movement, for instance, on the basis of primitive village communities, yet so short of technical equipment that they accomplished a colossal engineering feat like the Burma Road by methods which were old when the Great Wall of China was new. In Chungking streets today we see Chinese girls tripping daintily with shopping baskets over their arms—very much like the figures on a Chinese screen. We see heavily laden coolies trudging up and down Chungking's endless steps and hills very much as they did a thousand years ago—

because China has little petrol to spare except for aeroplanes and military trucks. Yet the sisters of many of those girls have discarded their traditional gowns and high-heeled slippers for boots and riding breeches, and gone down to the Burma front to help with political work among the troops to act as interpreters and to help supervise military supplies. Men who were once coolies and peasants, unconscious of the great social upheavals of their time have been trained with rifle and tommygun to become some of the most dogged fighters for democracy in the world today. A nation which can harness its past to the future like this cannot fail."

That was Douglas Wilkie of the Australian Newspaper Service. The next one was another correspondent who wished to remain anonymous. He spoke of Japan's new order :

"The Japanese want to introduce a new order in East Asia. Geographically, according to Japanese calculations, East Asia includes India. Some of us have seen the new order from its resurgence at Mukden in 1931, when the Japanese created an incident and exploited it to seize Manchuria. In fairness to the Japanese, it must be admitted that they have indeed introduced a new order—a new order of want where there was plenty ; unrest where there was contentment ; unemployment where all had work. That's only a brief picture. It has grimmer details—the massacres at Nanking, the brutal outrages against women wherever the conquerors have gone, the burning of villages

and the execution of innocent countryfolk for acts they never committed. The Japanese are right in speaking about the new order, but they've gone astray in talking about co-prosperity. Co-poverty would have been a better word. Japan's schemes for expansion are outlined in the notorious Tanaka Memorial, glibly repudiated as an imaginary document but actually based on plans which, as the whole world can see, Japan is now trying to execute. Some months ago there passed almost unnoticed a Chinese exposé of Japanese plans for the domination of all Moslem States. The Japanese are methodical. They have been working under cover on this scheme for more than thirty years. When the Japanese Premier Tojo talks of the Japanese going as far as Aden, he knows what he is talking about. East Asia is too small for the new order. The Japanese want to introduce it first to India and then to push on. Will they? India will help to provide the answer."

That was another correspondent. My next guest was Harrison Foreman of the *N.B.C.* and the *New York Times*. Harrison was technical director of that great picture "The Lost Horizon." Harrison spoke of the humour of living in Chungking:

"The life of a foreign correspondent has been much glamorized of late, principally as a result of the best-seller books some of the boys have been writing recently. Perhaps you'd like to know something of the life of a foreign correspondent in Chungking—one of the four big war-time capitals of the United Nations.

"To begin with, there are no taxis here—with petrol selling at over fifteen rupees per gallon—while rickshaws are so old and rickety, that a two hundred pound six-footer like myself finds it much safer walking.

"But walking in Chungking wouldn't be so bad if it didn't rain so much—sometimes ankle-deep in mud; and its sweat and puff and slosh and slither along, ever ready to duck for shelter when some bigwig in a horn-blowing, mud-splashing limousine comes tearing down the street.

"We newsmen live in a compound of mud-walled, grass-roofed huts, which looks for all the world like an African kraal, replete with meandering chickens, goats and pariah dogs. We have a telephone—which sometimes works. We have electric lights—which are a bit more dependable. Though not very. The power is exceedingly capricious. The current ebbs and swells disturbingly as you try to concentrate at your typewriter. And then suddenly decides to go out altogether. It's particularly annoying when listening to the radio. For just as the announcer says: "This is London calling. Here is the news..." Bingo, out go the lights...and the current for the radio. And believe it or not, they come back again in about twenty minutes—after the news period. Of course, but then change our job for yours? Not a chance."

That was Harrison Foreman of the *N.B.C.* and the *New York Times*. My last guest was James Stewart of the Columbia Broadcasting System and the American

magazines *Time* and *Life*. Jimmy Stewart had been through years in Chungking and before that, if I may quote him "too many years in Tokyo." Jimmy looked ahead:

"A few words about the future. Martin mentioned the great news story that is coming—the march triumphant back to Nanking. But just as I am sure that the rightful return to Nanking is coming, so am I also sure that Chungking will never be forgotten. Just as from the ashes of bombed buildings here, temporary material structures of homes and offices have risen, so from the battered but indomitable spirit of Chungking a permanent conception of equality and freedom will arise.

"I am optimistic about the future of China and of the world because I believe the people of Chungking have suffered too much from the ravages of barbarous Japanese militarism to be satisfied with any kind of a world organization in the future that does not make the recurrence of such militarism impossible.

"From the military necessity of the vast withdrawals to the west of China, the Chinese people, I believe, have gained a new conception of the magnitude and potentialities of their own country. From military necessity a tremendous number of new transportation and communication routes have been opened up. The basis for industrialization has been established in remote places which hitherto had remained isolated and incapable of advancement.

"I believe that when the war is won the tremendous

energy that has gone into the successful prosecution of the war will be harnessed for the benefit of the masses, bringing to millions of inarticulate persons the advantages of modern science and technical knowledge which can soften the hardships of living.

"Already it has been decided by the Chinese government that even after the government returns to Nanking, Chungking will have official status as an auxiliary capital. This means that the Chinese government has already acknowledged the role that Chungking is playing in the life of the nation. Chungking will always be remembered as having imbibed the spirit of determination and self-sacrifice, the spirit that can control the destiny of mankind."

That was James L. Stewart of the Columbia Broadcasting System and *Time* and *Life*.

And that concluded my guest broadcast from Chungking.

* * *

HAD an early appointment with Y. C. Koo, Vice-Minister for Finance on the administrative side. He is, normally, a banker, a former director of the Farmers' Bank, but is acting in this post. He is essentially a "loyal type," keen and intelligent, but a party man. Thin, a withered scraggy moustache, well dressed. My interview lasted three quarters of an hour. Discussed American Bonds, inflation, prices of commodities and their rise, the spiritual factor in this war, basis of belief in victory, the war budget, loans by small banks, printing of notes, fortunes and frozen assets, financing of armies.

Koo explained the purpose of the new American Bonds, whereby the purchaser would be repaid in American dollars instead of in Chinese. He said it was to absorb the internal currency and the purchasing power from the Chinese people. It seemed to me as if it was to induce those, who had the tendency to hoard, to part with money. Koo said : "Because China has been forcibly cut off from the rest of the world for trade, we are creating this artificial link with trade." These dollar bonds amount to a hundred million American dollars and come into operation on May 1st. I feel that the chief use that will be made of the amount thus raised will be to finance industry in China and thereby tide over, to some extent, the difficulties which will result from the closing up of the Burma Road which may happen any moment now. There is, too apparently, a shortage of commodities, and prices are abnormally high. Consequently, there is speculation with a view to profit by holding on the commodities. At the same time, foreign exchanges remain steady.

There have been two very generous loans given to China. The one is for fifty million pounds sterling from Britain and the other for five hundred million dollars from the United States. What a difference this is from the attitude of Britain in the spring of 1939, when Englishmen and even Downing Street lived in a kind of political twilight, in which they saw China going down within a few months of the beginning of Japanese aggression and consequently not worth

helping. I think the vested interests of Britain also envisaged the prospect of Japan "making it up with Britain, her old Ally, so that they both would profit out of the development of China." (I do not remember who used these words but they are here in my notes and I know they are not mine.) That was the time when Sir John Simon was reluctant to agree to the extension of financial credits to China as a measure of Britain's outer defence against Japan. The idea did not sink into Sir John's too brilliant mind. "China is a long way from here and we can give her nothing but sympathy. It's too bad what is happening out there, but these things are inevitable. The strong get ahead, you know!" Those were the words of Sir John Simon. Remember? But one could expect little from an Englishman who was so obtuse that he could only see China as a mere "geographical expression." How those words—*the strong get ahead*—must have hit Sir John in the face as the German *panzer* divisions marched on, mowing down everything before them and how they must have hit him in the face again when the Japanese ran through Malaya and Singapore as if it was just a cross-country race.

I am not clear how the British loan is to be repaid but from Koo I gathered that the United States had agreed to a liberal repayment in a manner which would not effect the economic and financial condition of post-war China. Koo described the position in China as one of "price inflation." He agreed that some degree of inflation of currency was evidently certain.

He described the rise of prices in commodities as ranging from ten-to-about-twenty times.

Then Koo went off at a tangent, being conscious, I suppose, of the fact that he was giving an interview and he spoke of the spiritual factor of this war which was bound to lead to victory. He had complete faith in victory. He repeated his faith once or twice. It was interesting psychology, so I asked him on what this certain faith was based: "If America and England were to send superior air power..." It was pathetic to see a high Chinese official compelled to base his faith in certain victory for his country only on the possibility of America and England sending superior air power to China, when this air power even in the minimum quantity appears to have been absent in the campaigns of Malaya, Singapore and Burma, at a time when America is alleged to be turning out one aeroplane in every eight and a half hours.

Koo then made a strange statement when he said: "The *Japanese* soldier is *convinced* he will be beaten." What comment could I make on a statement like that?. And then he said something rather nice when he referred to "a four years war with inferior equipment" and compared the way Shanghai had been defended for three months by the Chinese with the way it had been defended later by the great Allied Powers.

The strong have got ahead, Sir John, as you know.

I asked Koo what China's war budget was and he replied that China, unlike other countries, did not

publish its war budget. "But, in any case," Koo said, "it's insignificant compared to that of the United States and Britain and Germany and Japan."

All that was very informative and I appreciated the clarification of many points, but there were some delicate questions I still had to ask. Three of them. And I began with the least delicate. I asked him whether it was true that small banks loaned money at exorbitant rates. Though I did not say it, the idea underlying my question was to find out whether or not the moneyed class who owned these private banks were profiteering out of the war. Koo admitted that this was true, but he explained that the cost of government control to prevent this from happening was prohibitive. It was a pity, I felt, that when the whole nation was fighting a life-and-death struggle, vested interests, as always, did not miss the opportunity of making what they could out of the blood of the people. That has been the tragedy of the world and I do not think China could escape it.

My next question was uncomfortable for Mr. Y. C. Koo. I asked : "Could you tell me whether the vast individual fortunes—for example, the Kung fortune, —were in or out of China ?"

Koo nearly fell off his chair which I had expected and then he said : "It would be unethical of me to discuss matters relating to my superior."

I quite agree. It was unethical ! !

One more question. But then Koo was not surprised how tactless I could be in questioning. I

asked him whether the Chinese Government financed the Eighth Route Army and Koo gave an unconvincing reply that the Government bore "part of the expenditure."

Governments don't bear "part of the expenditure" of armies. They either bear, as they should bear, the whole of it or none at all. My information on this point had made me disappointed at the attitude adopted by the Chinese Government to the Red Army and I was disappointed even more at this make-believe which they put on for the sake of foreign correspondents.

This is one of the points which must be impressed upon the Chinese Government. For the whole policy of the Chinese Government to the Red Army was, to say the least, regrettable. And those of us who make this comment, make it because we feel that a change of attitude on the part of the Chinese Government to the Red Army would be greatly in the interests of China. The present attitude of distrust bodes no good. Some of the best troops of Chiang Kai Shek are keeping guard on the Eighth Route Army in the North when they should be fighting side by side against the Japanese aggressor. It might be said that this is an internal affair on which we should not express an opinion. But no foreign correspondent can overlook it and in order that our accounts of China should be fair and impartial and not just empty praise, this criticism has to be made.

* * *

Back to the hostel by eleven. The Ministry of Finance like several other Government offices began work as early as seven in the morning—war-time hours. Gives you some idea of how people are working in a country at war. Went to lunch with the British Ambassador, Sir Horace Seymour. Stanley Smith collected me. Also at lunch was the first Secretary, Berkeley Gage. Seymour, who is a typical product of the foreign office, seems to have adapted himself to life here. More and more I begin to realize how different these Englishmen are who have actually seen the war. Seymour said that living in Chungking was better than in London. "I can even get two fried eggs in the morning." The house in which he lived had not been spared by the Japanese. It had a roof in parts and much of the plaster had blown away due to bombing. I had gin and lime for lunch, my first drop of genuine alcohol. For lunch we had Chinese food with rice wine. It was raining outside and the roof began to leak—right into my rice bowl. Tea there was of course. Unsugared, "unmilked" Chinese tea! What a nice, liberal, friendly outlook on life this Embassy crowd has, including the Ambassador. Why cannot we get the same atmosphere in the Secretariats of India? That is what still baffles me. Heard that when the Government of India wired to the British Embassy in Chungking asking how the Chinese Government would react to my coming, the wire included the information about me: "...No food difficulties..." But then it is part of the thoroughness which we have learnt to

expect from the Government of India...or isn't it?

* * *

It was raining a little when I got back to the hostel, but it cleared up and got quite chilly. Was taken back in the Embassy car—a luxury, after the days I have spent walking in the dust or in the slush, depending on the weather. Did a spot of work and then we had cocoa—another luxury, for it was Rs. 12 a tin—with Roderick MacDonald and Wilkie, on the two-feet wide plinth, or verandah if you like to call it so, just outside our rooms.

Colin MacDonald was very nice about the guest broadcast I did. Said a few nice things which, from so conservative and seasoned an observer as Colin, I took as a particularly nice compliment. We regard him as the sort of elder newspaperman in our midst, partly because of his "age," which he resents, and partly because of his dignity, on which we concentrate our rude but affectionate remarks, which he equally pretends to resent. Any Englishman who can not only take to his Chinese name, but also answer when called by it is bound to be liked anywhere in the world—more so when he is a correspondent of the *London Times*.

I too have just been given a Chinese name. It is Ko La Ka. *Ko* means a tree and I believe it has a bitter fruit, which fits in with me because I always feel deeply conscious that I have roots in a past that give me a sort of foundation and stand by me in many a storm. *La* means to pull, which is definitely proletarian, because it is the sort of name a rickshaw coolie

would have, but I like it because it indicates that drag without which life has little attraction. It is that drag and that struggle—constantly—which has the honour of being in the middle of my name. *Ka* means "up and down." And no better word could describe my life such as it has been so far. Being a Sun Aries, I cannot expect anything else. So I like it all—Ko La Ka.

Did a good broadcast. I feel so nice when I think I have done something well.

Waited for the *communique*, which was not so good news. The Japanese had taken Taungy and there was possibility of encirclement. Discussed the position with Pepper and Jimmy Stewart. The points of view of these Americans are interesting. Just as I was going to bed round one o'clock, the lights went off. As Harrison said in his broadcast, it's a normal sort of thing that happens over here.

* * *

WAS up at six. It is a coldish morning. Was out of the house early and it was raining. Was collected and went to a village a few miles out of town, where there is the office of the Eighth Route Army. Chow En-Lai had asked me to lunch with his wife and the members of his "bureau." We met a car that was waiting for us at a street corner, because the movements of the Reds are marked by the Himmler of China, Tai Lee, a mysterious man who lives in a big house, next to Chow's in town, strangely enough. Tai Lee is never seen and never heard. He

is a sort of man behind the scenes and the Generalissimo's instructions are that Tai Lee must never give an interview to the press. One spoke of Tai Lee always in a whisper in Chungking, except the press gang, which is never known to speak in whispers. Tai Lee is the head of the Gestapo, though I use that word in its more generous sense , meaning "the Secret Police."

So we dodged Tai Lee's men, though I really didn't think it was necessary. But it added to the colour of meeting the Red General. Sometimes I wonder whether these precautions are really necessary or whether they are only part of the atmosphere that surrounds Communists all over the world. Whatever it was, the fact remains that we drove through the streets of Chungking feeling like small-town gangsters, and I even lowered my hat and pulled up the lapels of my coat just to give that subtle touch of the underground.

We were all set and we drove on to the village.

The bureau of the Eighth Route Army was on a hillock. Chow told me later that he had picked the spot because it was difficult to bomb and only a direct hit could damage it. Cheng, who was Chow's little Secretary, walked up with me and two or three others, who were silent companions in the car. They were anxious all the time to see that I was protected from the rain, even though I wore my mid-winter Pleydell overcoat, a blue herring-bone of Saville Row before it was bombed. And they offered me what little

they had by way of protection, which was an oil-skin umbrella. When we reached the top, I was the only one who didn't get wet, except for my shoes. I was ushered into a room and greeted with tea, unsugared tea. Tea without milk! No cognac, but just tea and hospitality of a people at war—a kind, genuine, sincere hospitality, which was more than warm.

Then came into the room the representative of the Communists on the sort of legislature which China has. An old man, he was typical of the Trade Unionists all over the world. His white moustache dropped at the corners, and when he smiled he showed a set of good teeth, spaced a little more than usual. He wore a black coat that buttoned at the top, but he retained the manners and the mannerisms of the world of grace, even though he belonged to a party which had no time for frivolities like manners, and where the only language that anyone spoke and anyone understood was the language that told you whether you could get work and whether you could get bread. He was intensely eager to get facts about India from me and asked questions which I found difficult to answer with confidence. Labour conditions, defence, leadership, conflicts, trade unions—these were the theme of his questions. And as he asked them, he leant forward with his hands crossed and waited so eagerly for my answers that I felt the answers had better be good. But often I preferred to say that I knew nothing about a matter than to give a wishy-washy answer. And he would always very courteously and kindly understand

that a man could not be expected to know about everything! And though I was grateful for his kindness, I became also alarmed at the immensity of knowledge that one still had to acquire in this world.

Then Chen came in and joined the conversation. I noticed that Chen had changed his clothes and was wearing a suit far too big for him. I looked a little puzzled and so he looked at himself and pointing to his long sleeves, said: "It is not mine. It belongs to Comrade... I have put mine to dry." And then he resumed the conversation as if nothing unusual had happened. But I took quite some time to get used to this comrade's suit of clothes which was far too big for Chen and struck me as somewhat odd. But after a while I began to look foolish, because I was the only one in the room who was conscious of Chen's attire, while all the others were thinking and talking of much more important things in life.

Chow came in a little later. The room almost lit up with his presence. There was a sort of smile on everyone's face and all of them rose in the presence of their General and waited till he and I had sat down, before they resumed their seats again. How much courtesy there still is in this world, if only one knows where to look for it!

The more I see of Chow and the more I talk to him, the more I begin to realize how much compromise is necessary in life. My mind turns constantly to India and its problems which are so much at a standstill, and I begin to wish that this spirit of compromise

could come our way. As I said in my broadcast, I saw more clearly a greater future for China if the Generalissimo and a man like Chow En-Lai could come closer together. Not only at the moment, in this struggle against Japan, but also later, when the war is over and the question of settling the various elements of discord in the post-war period will face them. But unfortunately I do not see this coming together, even as I see little chance of Jinnah and Nehru getting together in the near future.

After a long discussion, we had lunch. Chow's wife was also there. I got quite amused at calling her Chow En-Lai Tai-Tai, which is the equivalent of Mrs. Chow En-Lai. She was matronly in appearance—a kindly soul. Engrossed deeply in social work and women's uplift. She was the counterpart in social life of her husband in the field of battle. There were also two girl-workers, and the editor of the Communist paper, a cultured young man who spoke English fluently. The lunch was simple but wholesome. Chow made a very good host and everyone else was playing host to me, picking up the best bits out of every dish and helping me with them, because they thought I might not be able to make use of my chopsticks to the full extent. I was given some Szechwan wine to drink, which was very potent, and after lunch I could barely keep my eyes open, because the wine and getting up early had made me so drowsy. The weather too was a little on the sleepy side.

I was brought back to town by car. It was still

raining and we had to pass in single file down the narrow path downhill before we met the car on the road. As I walked behind Chow, I could not help noticing how far away his thoughts were. He lifted his trousers to avoid the slush. Chow with his brown felt hat curling up because of its age, and his not-so-new valise tucked under his arm! He seemed always to walk alone, as if the "General" in him was wanting to lead armies all the time—through the rain and over the green mountainside. That was an unforgettable moment.

We stopped for a while at Chow's town house. Chow and I waited in the car. We were parked outside a large house, one of the better-looking and more substantial houses of Chungking. A sentry was at guard. I asked Chow whose house it was. Chow replied with a smile: "Tai-Lee...my distinguished neighbour." And his smile broadened, but his tone was hushed.

When I got back to the Press Hotel, I could not help feeling the difference between the way official Chungking reacted to me and the way the leftist elements did. I do not pretend to know much, but whatever little I did know, the left elements were only too eager to learn from me. I think they have gained something from my first-hand account of the Indian problem and Indian conditions. But official quarters have been slow to make use of me and learn what I could have told them about India. To that extent the Government of India is almost like the

Government of China—a little less slow perhaps, to grasp the opportunity afforded to them. The impression I will carry back with me to India is bound to count and, I say with modesty, is bound to be of some value to China, even as it will be to us in India. I am trying to get as much as I can out of my stay in Chungking, but I can only try. I am also speeding up things, now that I am getting a grip on myself and on what I want to find out. But China is too big to be covered in a month. It would take years to get a real understanding of it. But I will be satisfied if I get the background of this country which has performed almost a miracle in resisting the Japanese for nearly five years. And I have a feeling I am beginning to get some idea of what the war in China implies and how it has been fought.

I was so tired when I got back from the village that I fell asleep on the bed and nearly froze because it turned bitterly cold. When I got up, it was nearly six in the evening and I had a glass of hot cocoa to make me warm. The lights were still out, so we began the evening with candles. Then suddenly they came back, midway between the *communique,* which threw a sort of new light on that which we had in hand. It was not a bright light, for Burma was gradually dimming in its defence.

When I got to bed that night, I slept like a log.

* * *

I WAS late getting up. It is much warmer today. The sun is out and the weather has completely changed.

I am feeling sluggish and peevish. Worked spasmodically. Wrote home. Also a letter to Madame Sun Yat Sen. That afternoon was equally slack. Played some indifferent bridge, followed by messing round the garden to get a bit of sun. Dinner at seven as usual. Then with Roderick down the road for some bad coffee. The idea was to try and get a walk after a particularly slack day. Saw a street squabble between two newspaper boys barely six years old. The one was complaining that the other had pulled his ear. And these same people never complain when the Japs bomb them year after year. It's all a little confusing. It knocks you a bit out of position, just when you think you have got the Chinese temperament all taped.

I don't know whether I will be able to stand the strain. Everyone feels the strain, but no one dares to refer to it. Cooped up because of distances. All on the same job. All keyed up to fever pitch. Brrrrrr... give me some music. Give me a cup of coffee. Real *cawfee.* Give me a slice of bread and butter which does not stink of peanuts. Give me a cigarette that tastes like one. Yes, gimme...gimme...

It's all in the day. All day I have been on and off the typewriter trying to keep pace with my notes and at the same time avoiding to get 'writer's cramp'. Still haven't had a line from anyone at home. One gets lonesome, isolated like this. But you wanted to be a foreign correspondent, didn't you, Mr. Karaka? And this is a *khooshi* assignment as assignments go in this war. Yessur, I sho did. So I take it and like it.

* * *

All through the night, you can hear the blasting of the rocks, as new dug-outs are being made in the mountains, the best protection they can get from air-raids. But I got up in a better frame of mind—less sluggish I suppose. Was shot out at short notice to have an interview with the Mayor of Chungking, K. C. Wu. Accompanying me on most of these interviews was Lee, a young assistant in the office of the Board of Information. We have tramped many a mile together, though it has been a silent tramp on most occasions, interrupted by my puffing and blowing during the early stages and later by nonchalant interjections like: "How much more?"

So we went along to Wu's office, which was high up on a mountain. I had been told more than once that one of the more interesting phases of war-time China, and particularly Chungking, was the work of the ARP. With 117 air-raids on its score-board, Chungking had attracted attention as one of the most-bombed cities of World War II. There has not been an air-raid here since October last, but 3rd May is the usual day for the Japanese innings to commence. It is the Mikado's birthday and so the Japanese usually celebrate this 'auspicious' day by dropping bombs over Chungking. What a state civilisation has come to! Wu is just perfectly cut out for the job. Efficient he looks and resourceful. He told me that he wished I had come a few weeks earlier, when he would have taken me to see his men in training. "Usually we do not allow the press there," he said,

"but you are a *friend* from India and I would have made an exception." And I felt perhaps he too had heard somehow that Pandit Nehru had wired to the Consul-General in Calcutta. That one little telegram of Nehru's has certainly been my passport into China. If only Jawaharlal would realize how much he means to China and how China looks up to him!

Wu spoke very highly of the average man in Chungking and how the common man and his wife responded to the appeal of the state for co-operation in this essential service of air-raid precaution. After the early bombings in which people were inclined to take chances and neglected to carry out instructions, the people themselves soon realized that it was in their own interests to avail themselves of the facilities afforded by the state and get organized. That is the secret of Chungking's survival and of the preservation of the morale of its people.

Such is the perfect system of spotting raiders that almost as soon as Japanese planes take off from their base towards the city, a warning is sounded in Chungking. A certain sign is put up on the hill, which indicates the nature of the danger. Almost immediately people start making for their shelters. They bundle up a few of their belongings and put them in the open to avoid their being burnt in case of incendiary bombs falling on the house. They then trickle into the dug-outs—private or public as the case may be—taking with them, their women and their children. There is no panic. There is no confusion. The signs con-

tinually change to indicate the nearness of the approaching bombers and when the 'urgent' has sounded the people have already settled down in the shelters. Quietly they sit for the period of the bombing, without talking and without any fear in their hearts. The place is still, except for the bursting of shells and the crying of a frightended child. But as a rule, Wu told me and it was confirmed by other people, even the children are unafraid of the noise of the falling bombs and the Chinese grown-ups, as Jimmy Stewart said, contrive to fall asleep! How the hell they do it, I fail to understand. If this is also a war of nerves, the Chinese have won it long ago, it seems to me.

We in India had not put our essential services to the test. We had been spared so long the horrors of an air-raid. Cocanada and Vizagapatam had been bombed, but they were hardly worth mentioning as air-raids. The sort of bombing which Chungking had known, which London had gone through in the September *blitz*, that solid pounding from the air with a view to destroy that which was on the ground, had been spared to us.

Our services, therefore, had only theoretical knowledge of how to conduct themselves in an emergency. They were services whose experience was only on paper and whose contribution was still theoretical. Someday I felt they would have to give a practical demonstration of what they could do. Parades and practices were hardly convincing, because it was one

thing to handle 'a corpse' which you knew was really alive, though labelled dead, and another to handle the body of a man crushed under the debris of a bombed house.

They tell me here that last year at the Hostel, two newspaper boys hardly eight years of age made a late rush for shelter. One of the kids just managed to take cover but the other was too near the blast of a direct hit and when the air-raid was over they found not a trace of him. But these happenings were rare, because the people of Chungking knew it was to their advantage to look after themselves. They needed no propaganda. They needed no A.R.P. wardens to urge them on. They had seen the effects of bombing too much to need any more propaganda to make them co-operate and organize in self-defence.

I asked myself then: "Must our people wait to learn the lesson first hand? Or will they believe those like me who have learnt something from the experience of others?"

Wu told me...

God knows what I intended to write here, because from comparative peace and quiet, the typewriters could be heard ticking again, and from the activity in the hostel, I knew something important was in the air. I looked out of my room. All the lights in the rooms were on and the card table in Spencer's room was deserted. That was strange at this hour of the night—it was nearing midnight and so I decided to investigate.

Everyone was frantically finding little places on their maps. The Japs had made another big northward drive, according to the *communique* that had just been issued. They were some hundred miles south of Lashio, where my plane had landed, so I suppose on my way back Lashio will be out. Possibly one may now have to fly over enemy lines at night as the NCAC did for many years after Hongkong was taken. It would not be so hot flying over as it would be better than being locked up here for the duration. There was an hour and a half's discussion with the boys on Jap aims and the meaning of these prongs that were sprouting up in the heart of Burma. It's no use worrying about them now...

I remember now what I wanted to put down in my notes, which I forgot due to the interruption. It was that Wu, the Mayor, had told me there was never a defeatist to be found in Chungking, and I think he is right. The morale of this place is so astonishing, it almost makes the war look silly. After a time the people of Chungking did not even try to intercept the raiders, because nothing effective could be done, and so they decided to pack their little bag allowed to them in air-raids and trickle into the shelters, there to wait till the bombers had done their worst. They just went underground and took it without murmuring. It's nice to have seen something of such a people.

As soon as I got back from Wu, almost everyone in the Press Hostel asked me whether I had seen his beautiful wife. Wu Tai-Tai! Which I hadn't done,

though she was at the AVG party and I am surprised so conspicuous a woman could have been missed by me. But I suppose one of these days she will be around again. Pretty women always are.

"Chow" was called and we ate our Chinese lunch with chop-sticks as was the custom in the Hostel. After lunch I did a little work on my notes and dashed off again to the second interview of the day. This time to see Miss Chen Chi Yi of the Women's Advisory Council. Women on Women's Advisory Councils all over the world always look alike and somehow I never seem to make the right impression on them. In this particular case, I was finding it difficult to keep my eyes open, because it was a hot day and I was feeling dreadfully sleepy. Moreover, Miss Chen Chi Yi was giving me a masterly account of Women's work in China, referring often to "Our brilliant leader, Madame Chiang Kai Shek..." And as I would shake myself up at the mention of the Madame's name, Miss Chen Chi Yi would kindly but disapprovingly peer at me through her glasses for my bad manners in dropping off to sleep in the middle of an interview. But she knew her work very well and gave me a lot of dope on the work done by women in China.

So let's have a look at Women's war-time work in China. Before the Sino-Japanese war broke out in 1937, the activities of the women of China were many and varied. Nominally at the head of the women's groups stood the Women's Advisory Committee of the New Life Movement, which was organized as far

back as 1934, but in reality their activities were unco-ordinated and independent of all control. The war made new demands on women all over China. It called for a large number of organizations concerned with refugee and relief work. War orphans cried out for help, and it was difficult for a woman to stand by and see these orphans cry. With these problems to be tackled, Madame Chiang Kai Shek convened the Kuling Conference on May 20, 1938. It lasted for ten days. To it, fifty of China's leading women were called—women who were representative of important organizations in the country. A new programme was drawn up and the women of China were working to a plan. It was decided at the Conference that the Chinese Women's Advisory Committee of the New Life Movement should be designated as the directive body of all Chinese women in war work and reconstruction, and that all other women's organizations were to link themselves to it as affiliated bodies. More than forty women's organizations became affiliated to this Committee and the driving force behind the reorganized movement came from Madame Chiang.

It is impossible to give a complete survey of the work of the women of China in this war. Each of these local groups could contribute a colourful story. One can give an idea of the Headquarters Group and hope that, in the work of this fragmentary cross-section of China's womanhood, there will be reflected the activities of other groups co-ordinated with it.

The tasks set for itself by this Women's Committee

fall into two main groupings. There are, firstly, the traditional duties of women: to give aid to the orphaned, the wounded, and the helpless. Secondly, there are activities equally important, that come under the heading of national reconstruction.

I have already quoted that passage on the meaning of suffering—a beautiful passage, which sounded very much as if it was Madame Chiang Kai Shek's, though I was not sure, which made me realize something of the humane nature of the work done by women in China. Perhaps even more than the work itself, it was what made them want to work that was so beautiful to watch in womanhood. I will repeat it here.

"Suffering and misery are the conditions of war; in this age of bitter inhumanity one is apt to listen with chill disinterest to fresh tales of horror. But this disinterest is directly measured by one's distance from the scene of violence. One cannot live in China and feel and think without being moved to action. The cold fact that China has 6,000,000 homeless refugees may mean little until one sees these gaunt, hungering people dragging themselves over thousands of miles of dusty paths. The fact that a Japanese bombing may kill four thousand people in a day means nothing until one hears flames roar, bombs thud, and sees the horrid outcome of the meeting of human flesh and steel shrapnel. China's ten thousand war orphans are only a phrase until one looks into the questioning eyes of a parentless child and feels the clutch of it's hand as it seeks comfort..."

In such suffering as this the women of China have found their sphere of action. And even in my sleepy condition I could not but help admiring the intensity of purpose which the women of China were displaying.

There were so many other spheres in which the Chinese women functioned. There were in all nine departments, though I cannot recapitulate them now. There was the Livelihood department, for instance, which I remember. It concentrated its efforts principally on the problems of women caught in the grindstones of the conflict and made helpless. This department also undertook and carried out the transfer of workers from districts like Wuchang and Hankow to safer districts like Shensi and Szechwan. It complemented the transfer of the industry, when machinery was transported on coolie-back to the interior, which was one of the more spectacular feats of the war in China. It gripped me to hear the story of China at war, and the more I listened to it the more I felt that we in India were too far away from the war to realize what was happening elsewhere in the world which had been caught in this mesh of fate and in this vortex of war. What must be happening elsewhere, where I have yet to go, I often wondered. What must London be like—London at war? Or Paris under occupation? And the other great citadels of man's freedom? Someday we will wander over what is left of the world after this age of vandalism is over. And with it our thoughts will turn to the greater and more formidable task of post-war reconstruction.

China has already learnt that to win this war, it is not enough to fight but also to build. The nature of Chinese society must be transformed—a revolution in the thought of the entire people is bound to come. There was a promise of that in Chungking. Someone put it very nicely to me the other day when she said : "Within the sphere of time that stretches from now to final victory, China must accomplish these developments that in the west required a period of over four hundred years. The horizon of the Chinese peasant, the unit of the nation, must be completely recast. He must be made politically aware of his duties to the nation and of those qualities wherein his present way of life is deficient."

In all these spheres women were playing a part—an important part. They have been caught by the tide which was to lead to the revolution. The women of China were on the march. So I saw for myself even in this brief spell here. What an inspiring sight it is—this new womanhood, that closely resembles the women that have come in the wake of the Communist revolution in Russia, and which is being born out of the pain and anguish of the Sino-Japanese war. To-day it was filling the gaps left by the men who were fighting for the country at the front.

"No longer can Chinese women be likened to loose, shifting sand," so ended the report I mentioned above. "They have been solidly cemented into a national government. They have given liberally from what they possess : money, skill, strength and ability."

They sure have given.

* * *

THIS morning I met a young Chinese, who is the Director of the Boxer Indemnity Mission. Though a party man, he appears to be more liberal-minded and can see the other man's point of view. He is in his thirties, an age at which no one can ever be considered responsible enough in India, but which in China is old enough to tackle any job. Han Lih Wu is a member of the People's Political Council. He is a friend of Tai Lee and has access to the Generalissimo. When Stafford Cripps was in China, he acted as a sort of liaison man. He would be classified politically as belonging to the liberal minority of the Kuomintang. He explained to me, in answer to a question, that the Reds were getting sympathy from foreign correspondents because their methods of work were more informal and friendly, whereas officials of the Kuomintang usually just behaved like officials. He felt that we (the foreign correspondents) could impress upon those in authority the need for a more democratic approach in China, as opposed to the party approach, which was at present so much in evidence. He said that the Generalissimo was quite outstanding, but after him there would be no one to take his place. The system did not allow of the building up of a successor, and the teaching of leadership to any others.

Consequently the only possible successor that China could have would be a group of individuals. I tackled him on the question of financing the Eighth

Route Army and Han Lih Wu regretted that the Red Army was not financed by the Government to the extent it should be. He gave me, to my pleasant surprise, a fairly dispassionate account of both sides. Said that he had often represented to the Generallissimo that the so-called blockade of the Eighth Route Army should be lifted, but without success. There were apparently other forces that equally influenced the Generalissimo, among whom, I am now beginning to feel, the War Minister, Ho Lin Chin, plays a prominent part. That was not what Han said, but I think it amounted to that, if it was shorn of all its caution. Ho Lin Chin from all accounts, specially those I got from the press gang, doesn't have much love for the boys of the Red Army. Ho is the orthodox militarist, who is born a reactionary and fights to preserve the *status quo*, without admitting of any changes, even that change which must come with time. I have now heard from more than one source that not so long ago there was a consignment of medical supplies destined for the Eighth Route Army, which was the kind gift of some foreign friends. The Generalissimo's permission was sought and obtained to allow this to reach the Eighth Route Army but in spite of the Generalissimo's promise, it never reached its destination. I asked Han Lih Wu whether he could tell me anything about this and Han confirmed it. He added that he had himself gone to Ho Lin Chin, but the War Minister took the view that this help was disproportionate to the small numbers of the Eighth Route Army and that it would not be fair to send

these medical supplies to that Army, when there were so many others which were also short of such supplies! A strange argument, hardly worthy of the War Minister of China. When I heard this I felt a little disillusioned about the men in power in China to-day. It was so much like the disillusionment that I had felt at home. Leadership was bankrupt everywhere in the world, it seemed to me, and the only hope of the future was in the common man, who was still unknown to the world as an individual. Vested interests everywhere were standing in the way of any real progress. It was a shame, a crying shame that when the common man was shedding his blood so freely, class should be the controlling factor in this war.

Han's valuation of various people was very good. It tallied with mine. He told me that once his group had petitioned for the removal of Dr. Kung from the office of Finance Minister, but somehow everytime he stayed on with added power. The Generalissimo had replied that it could not be done because it would upset so important a department as Finance. There were so few on whom the Generalissimo could rely and apparently Kung was one of them. So each time Kung faced criticism, it improved his position and made it more secure. So it was always to Kung's advantage to be attacked. I found Han very sincere and I was impressed when he told me that he had not accepted a higher post with greater remuneration and preferred to live frugally these days because he felt China demanded that sacrifice. This is typical of the young

and progressive Chinese to-day. It is most amazing to see how, in war-time China, such young men hold important posts of responsibility and what sacrifices they are capable of making in view of the opportunities they are voluntarily giving up. To-day it is the merchant and the hoarder of goods that is minting money. Even a rickshaw man and a cooly make much more than an average Government official.

Later in the afternoon at a Press conference met T. F. Tsiang, one of the outstanding men in China. Tsiang is the Director of the Political Department of the Executive Yuan of the Chinese Government. He was a former ambassador to Moscow and his position today is analogous to a Minister without portfolio. T. F., as he is affectionately called, uttered what appeared to be a definite warning to the Vichy Government. Referring to the recent delivery of shipping by the Government of Indo-China to the Japanese, T. F. said : "Vichy must understand that under the present conditions of shipping scarcity, the sudden delivery of 50,000 tons of ocean-going vessels to the war lords of Tokio is as good or as bad as sending 50,000 Frenchmen to fight on the side of the Japanese. This is a move," T. F. continued, "the seriousness of which we cannot minimize."

Asked by one of the foreign correspondents whether it would lead to a break with Vichy, T. F. cautiously replied that the Chinese Government would have to wait and see further developments before answering that question. But if his attitude and his

words were any indication of the official Chinese attitude towards Vichy after the formation of the Laval Government, then it would be reasonable to presume that this is probably the last warning that China is likely to utter to the Vichy Government.

Jawaharlal's speech at Calcutta has been splashed by *Reuter*. Jawahar's reference to guerrillas is the sort of thing that particularly appeals to China. As it was topical, I asked T. F. whether there was any possibility of getting Chinese co-operation to organize Indian guerrillas as suggested by Nehru, even independently of the Government of India. T. F. very shrewdly answered : "China would be glad to help India in any move directed against Japan." When he said it, some of the boys of the press gang smiled at me, so much as to say "he got out of that one very cleverly."

T. F. was followed by the usual military spokesman who began by saying as he usually did : "there is really not much to report." And then he would go on to explain the whole fighting in Burma and, when he finished, realized he had plenty to say. It is amazing to see how unperturbed and calm this military spokesman remains, even though the news he gives us often gives us the jitters. Perhaps it is characteristic of the Chinese temperament—the temperament of which Jimmy Stewart spoke, when he described how they slept in air raid shelters during the actual bombing.

Analysing the fighting in Burma, it appears as if the purpose behind the three-column drive of the Japanese and their continual by-passing of existing

positions is intended to threaten the Chinese and the British forces with encirclement. Thereby the Japanese hope to drive back the other two columns of allied defence, which must retreat in order to maintain an even and unbroken line. The spokesman was asked what could be the purpose behind this eastward thrust of the Japanese into the Shan States. It was his opinion that this was merely a supporting column to forestall any attempt by Chinese troops, now stationed in the Shan States, near Thailand, to threaten the rear and the right flank of the main Japanese column, which is now pushing on to Lashio. Asked whether this drive towards Lashio would cause the retreat of our forces on the Rangoon-Mandalay Railway, the spokesman said that it would depend upon strategic considerations—which meant of course that if encirclement was threatened, it would necessarily result in a "strategic" withdrawal. The inverted commas are mine. They have to be.

The whole defensive in Burma appears to me to be just playing for time before organizing the defence of India. After the failure of the Cripps mission I cannot tell from this distance how the land lies in India, but from reports reaching us, it would appear as if, in spite of political differences, Indian leaders have expressed their unanimous desire to defend India against Japanese aggression. But again and again it is stressed here in my conversation with various responsible Chinese that much will depend on how India intends to implement this desire to resist. China can

only understand it in terms of : " Will you or will you not fight ? " We have just heard that Col. Johnson has declared America's intention to give India every facility in order to make it the arsenal of the East. What India is deficient in will immediately be made good. If, coupled with that, there could come the promised awakening of the people to a sense of war consciousness, and resistance could be offered on a nation-wide basis, the output of manpower and materials would not only be enough to defend India when the time comes, but it would also allow the democracies to take the offensive with India as a base. In the meanwhile, if there will have to be retreats, one must be content to believe that we are trading space for time. And our future conduct in India must be based on the faith in and the theory of a limitless rear. So it has been in China, with only the will to fight and never to surrender as the one sustaining element against Japanese aggression. So it must also be in India. The fate of India depends on the co-ordination of manpower, material and the will to fight. Everyone of the hundreds of Chinese whom I cross on the streets of Chungking could tell me that. It is what I have learnt for myself in these few days here.

* * *

Two days without a bath and one day without a shave. After a clean-up started work for the day. Peng of the radio—or more correctly of XGOY, the Chinese International Broadcasting Station at Chungking gave a lunch to radio men. It was a series

of courses. The wine was local Szechwan. More like an ultra-potent Vodka with a strong flavour. The sort of stuff into which you would have to put neat gin in order to dilute it. The Chinese are always very eager to refill your glass the moment you empty it. I find it difficult to cope with Chinese hospitality. Then spent an hour interpreting Indian background to a journalist from the *Central Daily News* who brought forty written questions for me to answer. It was a tough afternoon, specially with a head that felt heavy with Szechwan wine. From that time, which was about five in the evening to midnight, it has been a solid slog on the typewriter with a short interval for *chow* and the broadcast.

* * *

HAVE been at the typewriter till noon, when after a quick bath and *chow* I went to see another political group in China—the Salvationists. They are a sort of connecting link between the Right and the Left, and from what I could see they spend all their time trying to bring the two together with a view to intensify the war effort against Japan. A thankless and almost impossible task. Somehow midway parties are not impressive affairs. Rushed back for the press conference. The outlook looks grim. The main fighting, it seems, has taken place on the Salween front during the last few days and only minor fighting has taken place on the Irrawadi and the Sitang fronts. We now learn that by the 26th April, the enemy had reached Keng Hkan. On the 27th and the 28th, one

branch went towards Mansam and Nanmeng. At the same time another unit went directly towards Hsipaw and then further north towards New Lashio, which is only a few miles from Lashio itself. The spokesman revealed that the enemy were utilizing the highways for facilitating their operations. The result of this northward drive is that the enemy has driven a wedge between the Chinese forces in the Shan States and those in middle Burma, somewhere around Mandalay. It would appear that the Japanese next objective is to drive the column, which is now near Lashio, westwards to close in the Chinese forces in the Mandalay sector. Meanwhile, from Taungyi, Chinese forces are turning eastwards and then slightly north-eastwards towards Loilem. At the same time Chinese forces from the Shan States are moving westwards with the idea of cutting off this Japanese northward drive. The position in Burma could well be summarized as an attempt on the two sides to encircle each other. The Japanese want to encircle the troops in the Mandalay area and the Chinese want to cut off this northward column from the main Japanese forces.

I said cautiously in my broadcast that the proximity of Japanese troops in Lashio would necessarily mean the abandonment of Lashio as an air-field. Anyone understanding the language of war-time commentators would realize that Lashio was lost. We heard later in the evening that we were to expect what was described as "an important statement on Burma." Snooping round I found to my disappointment that it

was merely to affirm that China would continue unhesitatingly to fight in Burma and thereby deny Japanese statements that China would withdraw from the fight.

An important statement on Burma ! This war, with officials round you, can drive you nuts.

* * *

Later in the afternoon, I had an interview with Madame Chiang Kai-Shek. "Interview" was what I called it in my broadcast, but in reality it was a friendly tea with doughnuts. I found when I left her three-quarters of an hour later that, as had happened to me once before, when I went to see Mahatma Gandhi, instead of interviewing the person whom I had gone to interview, I had got interviewed myself. But it is this sort of interview that makes me carry with me a more lasting impression of the person I had gone to meet, because I bring back something more than just answers to a few isolated questions.

I had to walk up the hill to the Generalissimo's headquarters with Lee, my faithful companion on these interviewing expeditions. It was a warm day and in order to look respectable I had put on a tweed check-suit and even managed to get hold of a clean shirt and tie. At the entrance to the group of buildings, which constitute the Generalissimo's Headquarters, the soldiers on guard stopped us. Lee muttered something in Chinese and I looked peeved but tried to look important. After all I was on my way to have tea with the first lady of China and I didn't like this pilgrimage inter-

rupted by periodic questioning by the guards. Then news went to the main bungalow and from that stage there was much more attention paid to me. The guard from that point onward tapped his rifle by way of salute, and equally formally I reciprocated by bowing low as is the Chinese custom when a civilian receives a military salute.

I was shown into the living room which was very simply decorated. One would hardly have expected that it belonged to the head of the State. Even the out-houses of Government House do not know such simplicity.

Madame arrived a few minutes later. She spoke in short, staccato sentences. She tripped delicately but her whole movement and mannerism was nervous and slightly agitated. I couldn't settle down either. She was too full of nerves, so restless. Five years of war had surely told on her. But she was beautiful to watch. Soignée, intensely feminine, beautifully complexioned, she almost made me forget the purpose of my visit. Somehow I couldn't look at her straight in the face and that seldom happens to me. Almost the first question she asked me was: "Tell me, I am interested, how do you happen to represent both a nationalist paper and the Government of India?" "Because on China they think alike," I replied, and I felt quite pleased with that reply. And then I felt more at ease and we sat down and she shot another difficult question: "What brought you to China?"

That, I said, was a difficult question, though she hardly realized how difficult. It was true that the Generalissimo's visit to India had inspired me and Sir Alwyn Ezra's generosity had made it possible, but to Madame Chiang I was even a little more frank and with a woman's curiosity she leant forward in the chair and said : "Tell me more. It interests me."

"But it is I, Madame, who is to interview you. That was the idea."

"Come another time for that. Besides, I have nothing much to say. To-day let's just sit and talk over tea."

So we sat and talked.

She was so beautiful to talk to.

She was so beautiful to listen to.

Why weren't there more women like that in this world ?

But before I started I asked her whether she could make it possible for me to see the Generalissimo, because from official sources I had learnt it was not possible. He had not given an interview to the press for a long time and certainly no individual journalist had had the honour of taking up the Generalissimo's time. Madame promised that if I waited a fortnight I would have my interview. Of course I knew what that meant, because already it had been whispered to me that the Generalissimo was at the front. Some said he was in Burma. Others said he was at the Yunan border, which was more probable. However, on his return, I would see him

and it was something to look forward to.

Again I must go back to the reason for this kindness I received. It went back to the same thing—the telegram of Jawaharlal Nehru and the letters which Dr. Pao, the Consul-General, had written as a result of it. India counts for so much in China. And as one who had smarted earlier in life at having the doors of London hotels slammed into my face by the landladies of Bayswater, Kensington and Russel Square, it was a strange feeling to find in this other land that every door, be it rich or poor, opened to welcome the Indian. What a difference there was between the East and the West.

There has appeared in the *New York Times* an article by Madame Chiang Kai Shek on the significance of China's struggle. I have read this article and re-read it because it tells the world what the East has felt for so long and what we have kept stifled in our hearts all these years. Here at long last was a woman who spoke our mind. In this article she told me more than she could have done in half a dozen interviews.

"Since China was opened to the world," Madame Chiang wrote, "relations between the East and West may be divided into three stages."

"In the first the weapon of the West towards China was always force. By pointing the gun at her she was made to suffer humiliation after humiliation. All her port cities were opened, in an actual as well as a metaphorical sense, at the point of the bayonet. The

result was what one might have expected. China resolved to have as little to do with the West as possible. She was forced to trade but she did so reluctantly and reduced social and diplomatic contacts to a minimum. Withdrawing to her own ivory pagoda, she decided to let the crude world go on its power-worshipping path. She scorned to demean herself by learning the ways of the West.

"This policy was not effective. It left China behind in modern scientific and industrial development, thereby causing her to get out of step with the changing world. In the meantime the West established self-governing cities in China on their own model in violation of China's sovereign rights, but, as a face-saving gesture, shrouded them under the thin veil of foreign settlements and concessions. The West also instituted a vicious legal device known as extra-territoriality, which removed foreigners from the jurisdiction of Chinese Courts.

"Nor did the West keep their hands off our material resources. The richest of our mines passed under foreign control. The foreigners administered our Customs, Salt Revenue, Railways, in fact took over management of virtually all our public utilities, while even the control of foreign exchange was vested in them. In every respect, the policy of the West seemed to be to get as much as possible from us by force and to give nothing in return that it would withhold."

These were hard words, but, my God, how true

they were. That they should have come from this beautiful, ivory-complexioned Oriental, and a woman at that, made me feel proud that comparatively early in my life I had already begun to meet some of the most interesting and important people in this world. But that is by the way. Let's go back to her article in the *New York Times*. As we read it round the breakfast table in hushed silence, one of us was heard to remark: "She sure can dish it out."

The article went on: "The superiority complex was a cardinal point in the creed of the Western Powers in their dealings with all things Chinese and this was insisted upon in season and out. Knowledge of Chinese literature and philosophy was, however, making some progress among Western scholars. It was recognized that China had, culturally, a great contribution to make to the world. Accomplished literati of all nations translated some of the greatest works of Chinese writers and made them accessible to the Western world. This, though a move in the right direction, failed to correct the misconception which the West have formed of China and which was based on their unquestioning belief in their own superiority. However much they might respect China culturally, they seem to be constitutionally unable to regard her as an equal. The development of trade made it necessary for nations to conclude political and economic agreements with each other and China was forced to be a party to many of them. It is significant, however, that in practically all these treaties, China was

inferentially considered as an inferior, not as an equal. This arrogant belief in innate Western ascendancy was largely fostered by the treaty port Taipans (foreign heads of banks and other business houses) whose prejudiced knowledge of China was restricted to associations with their subservient Chinese compradors and the ignorant gossip gleaned in their club bars. Needless to say this die-hard attitude did infinite mischief to China and to her relationship with the world.

"Then began the second stage. It took, however, a continent-shaking shock to compel the west to realize that China stood for something that was never dreamt of in their philosophy, and even then this realization was imperfect. When Japan forced war upon us in 1937—which interfered with China's foreign trade—the West became very sympathetic. China was immediately applauded, perhaps at first, rather condescendingly. But the interest, although sympathetic, was as detached as that of spectators at a college football game, cheering from the safety of a stadium while taking no personal risks in the game themselves. It was not until later, due to the strenuous and selfless efforts of freedom-loving men and women the world over, particularly in America and in the British Commonwealth of nations, that the man in the street realized, as he watched us, that it was his battle that we were fighting ; that it was on his behalf as much as our own that we were shedding our blood and grimly scarring the smiling landscape of our country to prevent our cities, villages and resources from falling into

enemy hands. We were regarded by him with a kind of puzzled interest, inspired by goodwill but still uncomprehending."

How right she was! I remembered again how the League of Nations had given to China a back seat with Guatemala, and I remembered how Sir John Simon, then Foreign Secretary in His Majesty's Government, had dismissed China in a phrase calling it 'a mere geographical expression.' I remembered also, for how could anyone forget it, how, when asked to consider a loan to China and to regard it as an outer line of defence, that same Foreign Secretary had shaken his head and said: "China is a long way away from here and we can give her nothing but sympathy. It is too bad what is happening out there, but these things are inevitable. The strong get ahead, as you know!"

Europe had been accustomed to look upon the Chinese as a sea of harmless yellow faces. Those who had professed to be experts on China predicted when the Sino-Japanese war began that it would not last six months against the mechanized forces of Japan. But ragged and backward and ill-equipped in metal, this same China has stood up to the onslaught of aggression, taken, without any adequate means of retaliation, this constant hellfire that has reigned from the skies and the earth and the sea, and stood on its legs long after the Austrians, the Czechs, the Poles and the Norwegians, the Dutch, and even the French with their impregnable 'Maginot Line' had been defeated.

"The strong get ahead, you know." Simon must

be eating those words.

All this I couldn't forget as I read slowly through this colossal article from the pen of an Oriental woman. I was like a child that nibbles at a piece of chocolate or at ice-cream, because he is afraid it would get finished quickly.

But there was more to come. More vitriol. More invective. All the oratory of Lloyd George and Winston Churchill paled into insignificance in comparison with that of Mayling Soong Chiang. "What a world of difference there exists," she went on, "between the fighting in Shanghai in 1937 and the defences of the so-called impregnable 'Maginot Line'! The Chinese were not allowed by the Foreign Powers to fortify the Shanghai area or even dig trenches near the city, though the Japanese were permitted to use Shanghai as a naval and military base. An extraordinary state of things! Yet our ill-equipped army, for over three months, held their hastily improvised line against Japan's naval squadrons, vastly superior artillery and war planes, and far better armed infantry. When the history of Chinese resistance at Shanghai is written, it will be recorded that we suffered enormous losses of man-power, because our soldiers were so eager to fly at the enemy's throats that they refused to remain in their trenches. It was only in obedience to strict orders from the High Command that our men refrained from hurling themselves as human bullets against the Japanese.

"Full realization of the significance of China's epic

fight began to dawn in the third stage when the Powers themselves felt the shattering impact of Japan's stealthy and steely might. They then began to wonder what the secret weapon could have been that enabled China to remain undefeated. Accustomed to view war in terms of material equipment, in the beginning they failed to understand that our weapon was the spiritual heritage of the Chinese race. Equipment, important as it is, is not all-powerful. The men at the front must be inspired, as ours were and are, by the knowledge that they are fighting for something that is worth the sacrifice of homes, loved ones and everything else precious in life."

Then came something straight from the shoulder. I could see, as I watched, the press gang read it round that breakfast table, when their eyes had got this passsage—all except Harrison Foreman, who had got this article for his paper. He was all smiles that morning, because he had read it a week or two ago in its original manuscript form. And I had a smile on my face as every Indian must have when an Oriental, and a woman, lays it on thick like that. For Madame Chiang said : "During the last three months, our Chinese people have watched with incredulous amazement the spectacle of Western armies surrendering because, it was explained, of Japan's superior might. This explanation is to us in China incomprehensible. It is also incomprehensible to us why the West for so long swallowed insults, indignities and face-slapping with a mien meek and mild on the plea that it was unpre-

pared for war. Neither can we understand why the West with its vaunted prescience could not see that each passing hour gave Japan added opportunity to prepare to strike more deadly blows, while the Powers contented themselves with fortifying their positions with paper bullets. When the Japanese started aggression against China, we were unprepared. In fact no nation could have been less prepared than we, for China had still not recovered from the wounds of decades of civil strife. But we took up the gauntlet.

"During the past five years there has been no instance of Chinese troops surrendering to the enemy. On the other hand there have been numerous cases of officers and men fighting to the last though there was no hope of reinforcement or escape—except by surrender. They disdained to embrace such an alternative. Several high Chinese commanding officers killed themselves when they realized that defeat could not be averted and that their only hope of saving their lives lay in surrender. To them death was preferable to dishonour."

Phew !——That was the sort of exclamation which we heard when they came to the end of it. And Harrison and I would exchange glances, as much as to say they've reached the word 'dishonour.'

I skip a little and get to the next tough passage, the *ne plus ultra* of plain speaking..."Let us for a moment leave the more tragic aspect of war and turn to one of the serio-comic revenges of Father Time that recent events have disclosed. In the last century, an Anglo-French

force took the Taku Forts, the shoreward defences of Tientsin and Peiping. The forts were built and gunned on the assumption that the attack would come from the sea. They were actually taken by detachments which had landed in the rear, much to the chagrin of the Chinese commander who bitterly complained that the foreigners had not played the game in accordance with the rules. The Western world ridiculed what was considered to be China's ludicrous conception of military art.

"Years rolled on. A few months ago, Hongkong and Singapore were attacked. Stupendous sums of money had been spent to make them invulnerable to attack from the sea—only to have both taken from the rear. The wrath of the old Chinese commander at Taku in the Elysian shades, if he still retains an interest in mundane matters, can be pardoned if he gave vent to a Jovian guffaw at the manner of the fall of Hongkong and Singapore."

The tension broke. The cups of coffee which were hanging mid-air through this passage went down in a few staccato gulps. Harrison lit his pipe, then broke out into a cackle. "Yessur, she sho can dish it out." He pulled up his pants and sailed out of the room.

I skipped through another chunk, because my eyes caught sight of the word India... "The Indians are a fine race with a rich cultural and spiritual background and have infinite potentialities. If they were convinced that they are making their war effort for the freedom of their own country as well as for the more abstract freedom of the democracies, they would

be surging with the same vibrant and unrestrainable enthusiasm that has fired the people of the Philippines. So far as the West is concerned, the spiritual strength of India in our common resistance is an unknown factor.

"India's war resources have not been tapped and she has not yet started to resist in the real sense of the word. Once her material and spiritual vitality and energy are given full play, the impetus that she will give to the democratic front will startle the world. The administrators of the Indian Government may be well-intentioned and sincerely desirous of galvanizing India into resolute war effort but they can achieve nothing fundamental without a radical and drastic change in their present-day Indian policy and its application to the Indian people. The British officials, many of whom doubtless recognize the rightness of giving to India the freedom for which their mother country is fighting, are as much victims of this policy as the Indian people themselves."

My mind went back—a long way back to a picture, the name of which I have now forgotten, in which a little urchin kept saying to all sorts of people many times his age : "You've said a mouthful, Toots."

Yes, what a woman ! And she was standing me tea and doughnuts and asking me questions about myself, when I was supposed to get a message from her for India. I have heard it said before that Madame Chiang Kai Shek is the symbol of Chinese womanhood, epitomizing courage, fortitude and infinite patience.

But as I saw her, it was also as if she was the mascot of her great husband, the Generalissimo, who was leading his great people in their fight for freedom. All men at some stage or other in their lives need a mascot and I felt that the great Marshal of China had found that inspiration which only a woman can give to a man in the most crucial moments of his life and career. The one outstanding thing about Mayling Soong Chiang was that while playing her part as the leader of China's womanhood, she still retained, even in the midst of a world war, her intensely feminine characteristics. It was so refreshing to find them in a leader of women to-day.

In everything she did and thought and said, there was a strong influence of the country to which she owed her education. America with its star-spangled banner was to Madame Chiang as to all Chinese who at some time or other had come under American influence, the hope for the future. She wore black, the smart black of *chic* Paris, though, in all probability, it was one of Alexis's models from Fifth Avenue, and, as far as I remember, she wore no jewellery except the emblem of the A.V.G. of which she and her country had reason to be proud. And that was a very significant gesture, for it showed clearly how grateful China was to these knights of the air who were playing a great and unforgettable part in China's war. Just by wearing that little emblem, she seemed to say to all the world that with more air support of this kind, China could play havoc with the Japanese on any

battlefield and in the air.

I did a special broadcast in the evening to celebrate my "interview." From to-morrow I have to do a daily broadcast.

On the typewriter again......

* * *

As I finished my broadcast I looked in at the theatre of the broadcasting station, from which I heard music and choral singing. It was a concert given by Chinese musical students of a Youth Corps. A packed house, almost entirely Chinese, listened attentively and intently to a girl singing Schubert's *Ave Maria*. She was not more than sixteen and, for a girl of that age, sang it perfectly and in faultless Italian. There followed a male chorus accompanying another girl. I think it was sung in Chinese. Though I looked in only for a few moments, I stayed on to the very end. The finale with the whole company was breathtaking. What was so striking about it all was the way that packed audience sat and listened in rapt attention and responded with a generous applause. Here, in the middle of a war, on hard benches, in a studio made of whatever was handy, with a company in some sort of uniform of a Youth Corps, was to be found the best classical entertainment I have had for a long time. It was so simple in its presentation, yet so intense in its execution. It was an indication of the growth of a new generation as a result of the hardships of a five-year war.

How different from so much that I had seen in

India! This was part of the compromise which I saw in the China that lay before my eyes. These girls in uniform, so different from the " dainty little Chinese girls tripping in long traditional gowns and high-heeled slippers in the streets of Chungking with shopping baskets over their arms, such as you would expect to see in an old Chinese painting or embroidered on an old Chinese screen." This was the other type to which Wilkie had referred—the type that had discarded the traditional gown for boots and riding breeches, the type which was to be found on the Burma front helping as nurses and interpreters and supervisors to replace men who were needed as cannon fodder in this war.

China was changing. It was something to have had a glimpse of it during the metamorphosis. It was the heritage of my generation to see changes all over the world.

Perhaps it may be well to point out that among the changes so wrought the most vital was that a new sense of values had been acquired by the world. It made young men feel the urge to come forward. As we watched events that constituted contemporary history, we found that some of the best known world figures had almost overnight disappeared from the front page. Once more there was room at the top—room for my generation. This disappearance of world figures was uncanny. Take England for example. One never heard these days of Stanley Baldwin; Neville Chamberlain and Ramsay Macdonald have long since

been forgotten, because the world in which we live cannot afford to remember them. Most of those, who were tried and tested and nurtured in the recognized schools of political thought and who emerged from it as leaders, have somehow failed to stand up to the impact of a world war which demanded something more from these leaders than impassioned speeches in the House of Commons. And as these world figures disappeared, there has come to the forefront a new generation, unknown to the world as individuals. These men had never had a place in the headlines before. They came forward from all walks of life—from mill, farm and factory—to take charge of their destiny with which the professional politician had tampered too long. We began to hear of new names in this world—names that were making history. A farmer's son, Timoshenko, was fighting with his comrades like a fanatic. There was Capt. Dolittle who had the honour of being the first to bomb Tokio. Two Indians also, who but for this war, we may never have heard of—Lieutenant (now Captain) Bhagat and Subedar Richpal Ram. The names of comparatively unknown places also began to appear in the headlines—Dunkirk, Crete, and Chungking.

I thought of all this as I was walking from the broadcasting station, back to the hostel. I went straight to my room and lay on the bed still thinking about this change in the sense of values.

I remembered then how, as a child, I leant over the balcony of our house in Calcutta, deeply moved at the

sight of a highly-polished Rolls Royce gliding majestically through Old Court House Street, 'with a plucky little Union Jack whipping from the radiator cap,' while a long line of troops stood rigidly at attention. For in that Rolls Royce, 'owning that bright Indian morning' was the heir-apparent to the English throne, Edward, Prince of Wales, the apple of England's eye. Many years passed and more recently in another city, New Delhi, on a similar Indian morning, a similar Rolls Royce glided majestically past King's Way and the War Memorial Arch. Again a plucky little Union Jack whipped from the radiator cap and a long line of troops stood rigidly to attention. But in that Rolls Royce there was no future English monarch. In it was a man who by the old standards of the Empire was only "a native" but who by the new standards of total war was one of the half-dozen most important men in the world—the Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek—and I said to myself—a new standard of values must have had to come even to the British Empire, which so long had remained unchanged, if Edward was an exile while a Chinaman was receiving the salute of an Empire.

(James Fisher of *Time* will recognize some of his phrases).

* * *

I LEFT the hostel early, accompanied by Lee, for the Executive Yuan—the Whitehall of Chungking—for my interview with T. F. Tsiang. Up the Lianglukuo we walked, till we came to the grey building, outside

which stood the sentry on guard. It was a typical war-time building, perhaps not more than a year old. It might just as well have been the residence of a not-so-prosperous merchant.

T. F.'s office was on the first floor. He received me with an abundance of courtesy—remember, he was a former ambassador to Russia—and uttered the usual meaningless politenesses which diplomats are accustomed to say.

I did not feel particularly bright so early in the morning and a dumbness was probably written all over my face. I thought it best to begin my interview with an easy question, so I asked T. F. about the possibility of China recognizing the Korean Government. That was easy and T. F. leant back in his chair, feeling at ease. He repeated my question to himself: "Are there any grounds for believing that the Chinese Government are going to recognize the Korean Government?" And he gave me to understand in reply that the matter though not officially declared was receiving the consideration—which he changed later to 'the serious consideration'—of the Chinese Government. T. F. added to make his answer sound impressive: "It is probably only a question of time."

Up to then he took me to be just another bum journalist—one of those easy to dispose of. So I took him through the usual run of questions—confidence in eventual victory, spirit of resistance and the usual *walawala* which diplomats like to talk and which

journalists don't like to report, though they often have to.

Then I touched upon India—and T. F. knew he was treading on dangerous ground.

"What suggestion have you got," I asked, "for the political deadlock in India?"

"I haven't said it officially before, but I would welcome the promulgation of a Pacific Charter, guaranteeing the freedom of Asiatic regions. We are all involved in a process of emancipation and China has also expectations from this war."

This idea in its concrete form was his own individual suggestion, but in its general terms it reflected the feeling of the Chinese Government.

T. F. continued, while I was taking notes: "The words—'a war for democracy'—must not be just slogan."

I saw an opening. The diplomat had slipped up and shown a slight sympathy for the Indian cause. For wasn't it what nationalist India was also saying?

Before I could cash in on it, however, T. F. was dilating again upon the Pacific Charter: "The main signatories to such a Charter should be the United States, Great Britain, India and China—as these nations are vitally concerned in the Far East. Others could sign it symbolically. But all Asiatic people must be able to look ahead with certainty and we want to see India convinced that it could look upon the war as its own war."

Again I saw the opening. I was not going to

miss it, but I wanted to ram it in the very first time. No mistake !

So I ventured : "Could you tell me what impression the Generalissimo brought back with him from his trip to India ? He must have conveyed them to you on his return."

T. F. was unsuspecting. He had probably taken me at first to be a boob.

So he leant back in his chair for this easy little question.

"The Generalissimo," he replied, "had very good things to say about Indian leaders."

T. F. paused.

"Was that enough ?" he wondered.

I wanted more.

So he added : "He had very good things to say about the people of India, whom he found extremely talented."

T. F. paused.

Surely that's enough. But I waited, meaning that I wanted more. When a journalist waits, it means he wants more.

T. F. continued : "He was very impressed by the potential capacity of the country for industrialization."

T. F. paused with a finite tone in his voice. That will have to be enough, he seemed to say.

I gave him the count—those few seconds we wait before interrupting a man who is being interviewed.

"Didn't he have anything good to say about the

Government of India ?" I asked.

Plonk he came forward in his chair. But I remained unmoved, my pencil glued to the paper, as if to say I was ready for his answer.

T. F.'s voice changed. The coldness in it died on the spot. I think his opinion of me also changed. For he stared at me for a while and said : "There is a war on, Mr. Karaka. You must remember that."

The ice was broken. The veil was lifted—call it what you like.

I got out from him, with considerable persuasion, that he believed, even as Madame Chiang had said in her article in the *New York Times*, that the whole war effort of India would increase beyond all recognition if India could feel she was fighting for its own freedom. Responsibility for defence must essentially be transfered to Indians, T. F. felt, but he took the realistic view that by this he meant the transfer of political responsibility and that the technical responsibility for the duration of the war should remain in the hands of a trained and experienced strategist like General Wavell. By "technical responsibility" T. F. meant matters of strategy and the planning of movements in war.

China was speaking out—even though only to an individual journalist.

I then asked him how he visualized the future conduct of the war, adding that I knew of the Chinese determination to fight on, whatever the results of the fighting in Burma. I was talking of "after Burma."

"China can only fight a defensive war. (Later, in the script I sent to him, he added the words 'unless large supplies reach China.') Major offensive operations must come and can come only from the naval powers. A land offensive by China would be very difficult."

Things were beginning to clarify themselves for me. I knew then that it was already decided that the fate of Britain must first be made secure. Therefore, it was in Europe that the real war would always be fought. For that Beaverbrook had, according to the allegation made by Arthur Moore of the *Statesman*, bottled up so much in the United Kingdom, which, many others felt at that time, should have been made use of on other fronts. But Allied strategy was clearly defined in the minds of those who shaped it. Whether they will be right or wrong it is too early to tell, but it was the defeat of Hitler first that was the goal of Allied strategy and China knew it must be content to play the game of "holding on."

T. F. also referred during the interview to the big mistake China had made in the past in its educational policy. "We have sent our young men to almost all the foreign universities. The result is that they have imbibed every shade of political opinion and it is, therefore, almost impossible to have a majority opinion."

Something like India, wasn't it ?

He gave the example of how doctors of medicine, trained abroad, prescribed German medicines when

they had been trained in Germany; French medicines if they had studied in France and English drugs if they had been to England. "The result was that a drug store in China had to keep almost every conceivable make of medicine. And it is the same in politics."

He described the present period in China as 'a transition period', as visualized by Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the founder of the Republic. "This period will continue until this country has found its centre of gravity, after which the majority party (which is the Kuomintang) will give way to a two or three party government, according to the tradition of democracy." Looking ahead he envisaged a split in the Kuomintang after the war. It would be one of the major changes that would be in evidence as a result of the evolution of thought and opinion that has come out of the war. "China has earlier tried the experiment of a democratic system on the French style, but the experiment failed and led to many years of civil war and chaos. The present system in China is born out of bitter experience."

The interview was fading out. I didn't want to hang on any more. I was already wonderig how I could get some of this out—past a Chinese censor's vigilant scrutiny that even kept diplomats up to scratch, when they slipped up. Past a censorship in India, which is often technically and metaphorically described as 'blind.'

So I beat it quick and Lee wondered why on the way back I was cracking a hot pace. I think he

thought I was just getting hungry for *chow*. So to put him off the scent, I stopped on my way back to buy flowers for the Hollington Tongs. The rest of the day went on the typewriter—on a broadcast, a telegram, an article and some other work I had undertaken. At night, after many days, sat down to play "Hearts" with the boys. Was the only winner and got up winning 120 Chinese dollars—about twenty rupees. But at the token stakes we play it is a lot of dough.

* * *

I AM a little feeble to-day and very tired. Got up late this morning. It was nearly half-past-ten when I shouted for my basinful of water. I had missed shaving for a day and skipped my bath too. But it was a warm morning and one just had to get under water to feel clean. Fu, my messenger boy, was trying to explain to me some complicated financial proposition by which I owed him some dollars, and I was just not feeling like playing with him. But Fu had definite views that he was right, so I gave him a five dollar bill and he stopped arguing. I suppose I must have owed it to him. Later Roderick came out with the theory that Fu looked too intelligent to be just a messenger boy and he must, therefore, be one of Tai Lee's starred men, deputed to keep a look out on my movements. That was Roderick's theory, Roderick suggested I should just say "Tai Lee" to him and it worked, for whenever I uttered those magic words Fu would just go away. It was also cheaper than

giving him a five-dollar bill each time. But Fu got used to that quite soon and on one occasion I had to resort to a peroration in *Gujerati* to prove to him that I was right and Fu believed me.

"You wanted to be a foreign correspondent, didn't you ?" was all I could say to myself.

Well, I was getting what I asked for with knobs on.

Went to lunch with one of the newspapermen from *Tass*—Yamashita, I believe that was his name. He was a stocky Russian, who wore a belt to keep his trousers up. He often told me that after Chungking I should go to Moscow. Already, to my surprise, he had sent to Moscow one of my statements to the Chinese press and he liked me, I think, because he gave me a gramophone record of the *Internationale*. I have heard many persons say they believe in victory, but somehow when Yamashita said it in his cold, quiet Soviet manner, I began to have faith in it myself. He was typical of the new Russia. It was in his bones and I could almost picture Russia to-day as I sat and listened to Yamashita talk. My mind went back to the days when after the Union debate or the Union elections, we would march down The Cornmarket arm-in-arm, singing :

"Mary had a little lamb, whose fleece was
white as snow
And everywhere that Mary went, that lamb
was sure to go,
Shouting out the battle cry of freedom
Hoorah for Mary ! Hoorah for the lamb !

Hoorah for the Bolshie boys who didn't care a dam..."

And it came back to me as I thought of the fight these Bolshie boys were giving on the Eastern European front—these fanatics under Timoshenko.

After lunch, I stopped at a hairdresser's to have a haircut. The saloon was almost entirely a bamboo affair. Men and women sat side by side and next to me a Chinese girl was having her forehead shaved. On the other side the barber was running his razor over a Chinaman's nose.

Strange country!

He Chinaman, he velly stlange fello. He shef his nost.

I got back to the hostel and Wilkie lent me some of his Dettol as an antiseptic in case I had picked up barber's itch or something.

* * *

"Lee Chin! Lee Chin! For God's sake bring me my pants," the voice of a fellow correspondent rose like a prayer.

It was his only pair and had gone for a weekly press. So he had to remain in his room till this essential garment returned. This is not just an isolated instance. All Chungking is like that, where the Japs have bombed people out of their pants. Often they have been left in Chungking with nothing more than the clothes in which they stand. Wherever I go I see people wearing clothes obviously not their own, but I have never yet heard anyone feel embar-

rassed about his plight. Never a word of lament. Never a voice uttering defeat. It has surprised me more than anything else in China. And yet, nearly every hundred yards, there is a landmark of an exploded bomb. As I said, I used to stop and look round in my first few days in Chungking. I would feel almost uncomfortable if I came to a street where a house still stood intact with glass windows and a polished door. Yes, that is why some of us ask ourselves as Colin had said: "How can you defeat a people who refuse to admit defeat?"

* * *

Meanwhile in Burma things don't look good to me. The Japanese northward drive has reached a point from which it will attempt to move in one of three ways. Although the Chinese military spokesman had thought that the Japs would try to go westwards from Lashio with a view to encircle the Chinese troops in the Mandalay sector, two other possibilities are not discounted in foreign and diplomatic circles in Chungking. This phrase, "foreign and diplomatic circles," is often used in journalism, when indulging in intelligent anticipation. That is why diplomatic prophesies sometimes go wrong! But I was honest with All-India Radio and in my broadcast that night I said: "These possibilities, it must be emphasized, are in the nature of speculation."

One view is that the Japs will try to go even further north from Lashio and try to establish themselves there before the outbreak of the monsoon, thereby

completing the war on the eastern Burmese front in addition to their gains in the south. Another view is that the Japs may against all expectations direct their next drive not towards India, but towards China from the Yunan border, on the assumption that if such a drive were successful, it would make the Japanese troops. which number some 600,000 in China, available for use against Soviet Russia. The Japanese idea would be to shut out China from her allies and concentrate their drive on the conquest of China. It would not be easy for the Japs to do this, because China is gradually becoming more and more self-sufficient in its defence. China may not, if isolated, be able to take an offensive, but it could certainly hold out very long with the organization that has been effected in China. Moreover, China could always be used as an air base against Japan and with the increasing output of the Allies, this factor would tell in favour of China more than the Japs suppose.

One other factor cannot be overlooked. A stage has come when the Japs can hardly inflict any more material damage on China from the air. As far as morale goes, the Chinese have now begun to look upon an air raid in much the same way as we in India look upon the monsoon—as rather an annoying little detail with which one has got to put up for a while.

The boys at the Hostel, who happened to listen in to this broadcast of mine, ragged me when I came back.

"I'd like to see you call it a little detail," Spencer

said, "when you've had four years of it."

* * *

I LISTEN in to Tokyo radio quite a lot. When I was in India I was not able to judge how ridiculous was the stuff they put over the air about Chungking. Now that I know what Chungking is like, I feel the Japs have no idea how stupid they sound. To-day someone has been talking all day about the "Scotch" earth policy...Aberdeen will be furious to be associated with such vandalism and extravagance! Then again someone said from Tokyo: "In the old days the Chinese used to eat thirty dishes. Now they can eat only nine." From which Tokyo concluded that there was scarcity of food in China!

* * *

IT'S Sunday and most of the Hostel have gone to the Australian Legation, which is on the other bank. I got up late, catching up on some lost sleep. Did a long spell of work right up to 3 o'clock. Then went to see a movie with the Junior Censor. It was an expedition downtown. The cinema was like a large garage dump with hard seats and improper lighting. All the seats were five dollars a piece. We saw something of a Russian musical picture—an odd assortment of music and singing. *Libeslied,* a little ballet, an étude, piano, violin. It was hot and sticky and the smell of sweat from neighbouring arm-pits filled the air. Stale smoke. Chattering Chinese women. We walked out half-way, because I was feeling sick. Then walked in the dust and the heat further downtown for

a cup of cocoa at the expensive *Kwan Sen Yuen* (at least, that is how I think it is spelt). Then stopped at the headquarters of the New Life Movement to see the end of a volley-ball game, with two crack teams playing. It was the smart sporting event of the war-time capital. After which strolled on to the *Moscow Cafe* for a "foreign" meal.

Next to us at the *Moscow* at a table was a young husband, wife and kid, aged about three. They looked at me once or twice, but more out of curiosity. They ate Russian *hors d'œuvres*. Then came soup to their table. The kid was babbling most of the time. Midway through the soup the kid felt uncomfortable. Showed it wanted to go places and do things. So the young Chinese papa put his spoon down and muttered something to mamma, who concurred and papa took little kid to corner, two feet away from our table and holding the kid in the orthodox position, knelt down and with the orthodox strange persuasive voice papa helped baby to relieve itself on the floor of the *Moscow*—two feet away from our table! The kid stopped babbling and papa came back to table, picked up his spoon and was eating soup again. Soup on the table; soup on the floor. Hallelujah! It left me gaping, but nothing worried the young Chinese couple and even the Censor was not much disturbed. The war didn't stop for little babies to piddle. China was at war.

It was dark now and there were no rickshaws willing to pull us uphill. It had been a hot day and they had earned their bowl of rice and more. So we

walked back to the hostel through the slush and in the darkness of a Chungking night, stumbling, because the streets were not levelled and were still rough where the bombs had fallen last year and the year before. A bus ride was too much to hope for, because all the buses that passed us on the road were packed to overflowing. When I got back my feet were sore. We had walked a good seven to eight miles that day. I turned in early and for the first time I counted the days. Sometimes I appreciate this simplicity of living and this toughness, but so often too I feel soft and yearn for the things that are now far away.

* * *

HAD lunch with Han Lih Wu. We ate at the *Carlton*. There was no truth in the rumour that it had anything to do with the *Carlton* in London, or the *Carlton* anywhere else. Nor could there even have been a rumour, you realized, once you got into this dilapidated place, where the food was just tolerable and where the service stank. Han clarified many things for me. I had asked him to see if he could fix up my meeting Tai Lee, but it appears it was *defendu*. The Himmler of Chungking never saw anyone. And rumour said that when you did have to see him, you wished you hadn't. The Generalissimo had forbidden him to give interviews to the press. So Tai Lee still remained the most elusive, evasive figure in Chungking.

I worked most of the rest of the day. Catching up on notes is getting a stiff affair. But it has either

got to be work or I have to trust too much to memory.

At dinner in the common room I saw Professor Votaw walk in with a small book tucked under his arm. My eyes popped out as I saw the dust cover. I felt a little self-conscious, for it was the Indian edition of my *Oh! You English.* It had got to China only that day along with a book of Peter Fleming, which came for the Minister of Communications from a friend in India. The Minister of Communications was a voracious reader, I was told, and when Votaw said I was in Chungking, the Minister said he would "throw a party for the author." I tried to feel a little bashful at being called an "author" but I think I liked it. It was the thrill of seeing something I had written come all the way to China that felt so good.

*   *   *

BUT more important things were happening. It was revealed in Chungking to-day that a post-war five-year industrialization plan was being studied by the National Resources Commission of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The plan which will be ready by September is the first of a series of industrialization plans to enable China to be self-sufficient in industries, mining, power supply in the post-war democratic world. The Commission's experts visualize that industrially China will have enough iron and steel products to meet her most fundamental needs at the end of five post-war years. Her machinery industry would be developed to such an extent by then that

China would be able to make her own power engines, her own motor cars, locomotives, aeroplanes, steamships, spinning and weaving machines, and tractors and other agricultural machinery. It would also be able to make the chemicals required for various industries and such things as radios too. China's abundant reserves of tungsten, antimony, tin and mercury, when fully developed, as provided for in this plan, would be able to supply a considerable portion of the world's needs. Before the Lend and Lease Bill came into force, 85 per cent. of China's war-time debts were paid by the war-time exports of these four ores.

This plan would need at least 30,000 engineers and technicians, and some 800,000 workers to man the factories and mines. The Commission has now only 9,500 engineers and technicians and only 170,000 workers. Therefore, a gigantic training programme has also been launched to prepare for the future. China realizes that a large amount of money, machinery and technique would be required in the execution of such a plan and Mr. Chien Chang-Chao, the Commission's Oxford-returned vice-director expressed the hope that foreign, specially American and British, capital, machinery and personnel would participate in the industrialization of China. He echoed the voice of modern China when he said : "We will not remain any more a purely raw-material supplier." How sure the Chinese are of their future !

* * *

MEANWHILE, the *Reuter* news from India as quoted

from the B.B.C. tell us about the Allahabad resolution of the Congress, wherein the Congress speaks of going no further than non-violent non-co-operation. As the text of the Congress resolution said: "The proposals of the British Government and their subsequent elucidation by Sir Stafford Cripps have led to greater bitterness and distrust of that Government, and the spirit of non-co-operation with Britain has grown. They have demonstrated that even in this hour of danger, not only to India but to the cause of the United Nations, the British Government functions as an imperialist government and refuses to recognize the independence of India or to part with any real power."

A little further the resolution says: "India resents this treatment of her people as chattels to be disposed of by foreign authority." And then comes the significant sentence defining the attitude of the Congress towards the War. "In case an invasion takes place it must be resisted. Such resistance can only take the form of non-violent non-co-operation, as the British Government has prevented the organization of national defence by the people in any other way."

This was a staggering blow to me here in Chungking. I am asked to explain how such an explanation can follow so closely on Pandit Nehru's speech at Calcutta, wherein he said that guerrillas should be organized on a large scale and that "hindering the war effort would be tantamount to helping the enemy." Many responsible Chinese say that they are perplexed. I feel that they are disappointed too, because in many ways they

are beginning to look to India for help, now that they will be isolated from the rest of the Allied world. It is the feeling in Chungking that the Congress resolution amounts to encouraging the hopes of the enemy. On the air I heard the B. B. C. observer in India, Kennard, refer to the attitude of the Congress as "unreal," but a more brutal comment was made to me by one of the pressmen who said that it was "conniving at the seduction of India." This point of view is understandable when you bear in mind that this newspaperman speaks with four and a half years' experience of Japanese atrocities and of the Nanking massacres. The Chinese can hardly be anything but perplexed at the resolution of so responsible a body as the Indian National Congress. Even from the little I have seen, I feel quite certain that anyone who speaks of offering non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese has little idea of the morals of Japanese soldiers. So long as I was in India, I was sometimes inclined to give the Japanese the benefit of the doubt, but not now. Their treatment of Chinese women is too ghastly and sordid to bear repetition. It is likewise true that they bayoneted little children in the open streets, because it amused them. So that, with all my regard and respect for the Congress and its work in India and of those great Indians of the calibre of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, I come regrettably to the conclusion that their policy of non-violence, great as it is as an ideal, will be no answer to a Japanese bullet or a *panzer* division. I think Jawahar knows

this, but not the Mahatma.

Listening in to All-India Radio's news bulletin from New Delhi, I found that my broadcast, in which I gave a resumé of Chinese reaction to the Congress resolution, was extensively quoted.

* * *

On the eve of the enforcement of the National Mobilization Act, the Generalissimo made a stirring broadcast to the nation last night, calling on the Chinese people to form a high resolve to mobilize their strength "for the purpose of establishing a modern State, carrying out the task that lay ahead." He urged the Chinese people "to bestir themselves to restrict consumption and intensify production and put all the resources of labour, skill and knowledge at the disposal of the nation and the war." The Act, which came into force as from to-day (5th May) requires of citizens that they should offer their abilities to the State and sacrifice individual freedom for the protection of national freedom and the freedom of humanity. "The least we can expect of ourselves," the Generalissimo said, "is that we should not prove unworthy of our Allies."

These words have clarified and emphasized the Chinese determination to carry on the struggle without faltering. The war in Burma has entered upon a crucial stage. Perhaps "critical" is the more appropriate word, but it tells me clearly that Burma will shortly be given up as lost. It is admirable that the leader of one of the Allied Nations, which has been

battered so long, should still be able to speak with so much courage. It is no wonder that even the Red General, Chow En-Lai, said to me that only under Chiang Kai Shek could China successfully resist the Japanese invasion. The Generalissimo has mobilized an army that is to fight at the front, but he has also mobilized a nation to fight in the rear. Believing as he does in the theory of a limitless rear, he wants his people to fight, on every inch of Chinese soil, the superior mechanized forces of Japan. Chiang believes that people are more important than armies. Chiang believes that China would lose the war if it fought only with its army, but that there was hope of victory if the whole nation was at war. And what Chiang believes is the faith and the religion of five hundred million Chinese people, who are involved in this war. Once in despair, Madame Chiang Kai Shek said: "Even God seems to be on the side of the big battalions." To-day there isn't that feeling of despair in China. A whole host of powerful Allies have now come into the war on China's side. American youths of the A. V. G. are giving up their lives that China may live. President Roosevelt has given his solemn pledge that, whatever happens, China will not be let down. Five hundred million U.S. dollars and fifty million pounds sterling have been given as a loan on easy terms to China. Even so I cannot help feeling that it is not enough and that China's position to-day in terms of Japan has worsened from what it was before the outbreak of the Pacific war.

"What will happen to China?" I begin to

ask myself.

Seeing China fight has made a profound impression on me. It has, I confess, largely influenced my attitude towards this war. Even so I must borrow a phrase from Mr. Winston Churchill when he joined hands with Soviet Russia, and adapt that phrase to my requirements, and say: "I will not unsay one word that I have said on the Indo-British deadlock that exists to-day." It is a factor which has to be faced, however much one may wish to gloss over it. I cannot overlook, and no self-respecting Indian can, the peculiar and somewhat unsatisfactory position of India in this war. So that those of us who have come forward and want to help in this war, as distinct from those who are fishing for a title or an official pat on the back, must clarify our position in case it is misunderstood and even misrepresented. We have come forward not because of the flamboyant appeals of high men in high places but because we have seen the sufferings of small people in small places. Let us be quite clear on this point, in case it should be interpreted that we have compromised the position of our country. If there are Indians to-day, both men and women, who are doing something for the war effort in this country and if there are Indians giving up their lives on the various fronts of this great World War, it is not because we are thrilled at the distant and chilly prospect of attaining *dominion status* at the end of the war in an Empire or a Commonwealth, in which one partner, Australia, still invokes the blessings of God

that it should remain white and in which another partner, South Africa, still denies to my countrymen, by legislation, the ordinary decent courtesies of life. But if we have come forward, it is in spite of all the humiliation that has been our heritage from 150 years of British rule and because we find we cannot stand aloof in a war in which humanity as a whole is involved. Humanity as represented by the gallant men of China. Humanity as represented by the men fighting like fanatics under Timoshenko. Comrades in peace, comrades in arms. Humanity as represented by those Americans who have come to fight in China and India all the way from their homes to respect Lincoln's words at Gettysburg that 'government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from this earth.' Humanity as represented also, by those Englishmen from mill, farm and factory—the Englishmen of Dunkirk, the Englishmen of Coventry, the Englishmen of Southampton, as distinct from the Englishmen who dictate to us from Whitehall. It is because this humanity is involved—a humanity which has done us no wrong—that we are found willing to do what little we are allowed to do in the world war of to day.

I feel we are fighting if only to help free men to retain their freedom from the onslaught of Hitler and the Third Reich in the West and from the onslaught of Tojo and the war-lords in the Far East. We want to see freedom restored to those people who are to-day crushed under the Nazi heel and who are suffering silently the most brutal inhumanities that man could

ever inflict on man. So that so long as the status of my country continues to be what it is, it must be regarded only as a coincidence that we are fighting on the side of an Empire.

World opinion, I feel, is definitely coming to our side. I have just read Edgar Snow in the *Saturday Evening Post* and it is heartening to see this understanding expressed by one of the most respected and most widely read magazines of the freedom loving American people. Snow realizes that India is the centre of the problem to-day and the hope of Allied strategy in Asia. "Formerly we Americans could take India, as the saying goes, or leave it alone. But whether we like it or not, India may become as much our problem as are the jurisdictional disputes of Messrs. Green and Murray. What happens or does not happen in India can cost us heavily.

"It may be considered bad cricket in some quarters to bring it up, but the moment we got into war the American people perforce assumed a share of responsibility for India, 'that most truly bright and precious jewel in the Crown of the King,' as Mr. Churchill describes it. Sooner or later we shall have to look this horse in the mouth—and most certainly so when our troops begin to fight for it. Here I am not interested in the morals or ethics of the independence question, but it is pertinent to show the political and economic limitations of Indian militarization....

"Feudal inequality between the vast wealth and power of the richest princes and the misery and

ignorance of the Indian people is a further reason for the present weakness instead of strength. No one has seen poverty till he has seen the Indian peasants, under either foreign rule or one of the 563 native princes who control about a third of the nation's 1,800,000 square miles.

"Out of the amazing social, political and economic anachronism that is India, many of us expect the British to build an 'arsenal of democracy' in the East. Certainly India's industrialization is an inherent part of the historic logic of the whole war. But as yet only a fraction of India's war potential, which far exceeds that of China and Japan combined, has been mobilized."

Snow goes on a little later to say: "What of India's trained man-power? It is most inadequate to meet blows to be expected from both East and West. There are nearly five times as many Indians as there are Germans, yet there is not more than one trained Indian soldier for ten raised by the Nazis. If Britain could recruit Indians in the same ratio as Japan has mobilized her people, the latter would face an Indian army of 25,000,000 men. Before 7th December (1941) India had only about 1,000,000 troops.

"Even with the full and whole-hearted co-operation of the Indian people, the British administration would have faced extraordinary handicaps in overcoming the stagnation which has left India so far behind her more advanced neighbours. There has not been that co-operation. It was lost in 1939, when the British arbitrarily declared India a belligerent at the outbreak of

the European war....Two years of precious time had been lost when both Germany and Japan began to imperil India directly and at last impressed Delhi with the need for a further effort at reconciliation with Indian nationalism."

I felt as I read through this article that the more intelligent of the world had understood my country. How nice it felt, as an Indian, to read through this article in the *Saturday Evening Post* by Snow, who had given us *Red Star Over China* and *The Battle For Asia.* One day I feel sure he will turn his pen to a full-sized book on India and it would be read in this country as no other book by a foreigner on India had ever been read. Of that I am certain.

Listen to this: "Many Indians cannot see why," Snow goes on, "since we (*i.e.,* the Americans) guarantee the independence of Canada, Mexico and all South America, and the British can recognize the independence of Syria and China and promise liberation to countries like Belgium, Poland, Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, their own aspirations should be denied. It is not easy to answer them. Though India's contribution to Britain's survival has been small compared to its potential, it is great beyond comparison to the help given by those countries. *Britain's victories in Egypt, Libya, Abyssinia and the Near East would scarcely have been possible without Indian troops. Indians bulked large—though not large enough in the defence of Singapore.* In fact India's troops are, like ours, scattered all over the world." (The italics are mine).

"Such are roughly the conditions which keep the great rivers of India's help dammed up to a mere trickle. Who is more to blame, Britons or Indians, is no longer the question to thoughtful men on either side. This article takes for granted that Americans are fully aware of Britain's tremendous contribution to India's development and welfare. Every sincere Indian patriot recognizes that, I believe, and also concedes the need for continued Anglo-Indian collaboration. But the imperative need for creating a formula for that collaboration now, without another moment's delay—that is what neither side seems to realize. That is what disturbs Americans. The complications, the accumulation of centuries of social degradation and backwardness of rulers as well as ruled sometimes seems insurmountable. But the pity of it is that the grandeur of vision, the determination to do the impossible, which has solved no less staggering difficulties on the home front, has not been allowed to spill over upon India for more than a fleeting moment or two. It is a fact that India can be fully won to the Allied cause and democracy, if Mr. Roosevelt can say that we shall produce so many planes a year, Mr. Churchill can say to England, we must have the co-operation of the Indian people. And he can get it."

Then Snow slashes out. "The old arguments of empire have collapsed. The sanctity of British investments, or American investments? What do a few hundred millions matter when we are throwing billions into the furnaces of war and millions of men

are dying? Not that it was ordained that the have-gots must lose their goods, if they moved fast enough. Surely part of the lesson we are getting to-day from Japan, and also from China, is that the alleged incompetence of the Asiatic to govern himself, or to defend himself, is precisely the myth which has exploded beneath us."

As I said, Snow is heartening to read.

* * *

BIG news is in the air. Chinese guerrillas have launched attacks on and raided a dozen Jap-occupied Chinese cities, including Shanghai, Nanking, and Hanchow. This represents the biggest co-ordinated guerrilla swoop since the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war. The most interesting factor about these raids is that they were carried out in co-ordination with the activities of loyal Chinese inside these Jap-occupied cities. These raids were probably made possible by the thinning of Japanese troops who have been withdrawn from these areas, which they used to garrison, to take their place at other battle-fronts, which have opened up since the outbreak of the Pacific war. The effect of these raids will undoubtedly be to discourage further withdrawals from the occupied areas, thus keeping locked up many Japanese garrisons, which would otherwise have been used in Burma and elsewhere.

I understand that Chinese guerrillas have long been operating on the fringe of the occupied towns, where they have taken a steady toll of the Japanese on

railways and highways. According to reports reaching Chungking, these guerrillas have caused great confusion in the towns they raided, cutting down communications and railway lines and suspending traffic for several days. Telegraph poles have been cut down and highway bridges have been blown up.

In their operations the guerrillas used hand grenades and explosives. According to one report, reaching us here in Chungking, the explosions rocked the city and several fires broke out. The result has been that the Japanese have been taken completely unawares by these guerrilla raids, and it is said that there was so much confusion that the Japanese found it necessary to proclaim martial law, bolt the city gates and carry out a house-to-house search to catch the offenders. Such a search has resulted in little, because there appears to be a large section of lawless Chinese population, which is keen and eager to fight as it were from within.

Even so, these raids, large though they may be, must not be interpreted as the beginning of a general counter-offensive. The B. B. C. seemed to give us that impression in their news bulletin, obviously relying on their *Reuter* message. I cannot envisage a general offensive at the present moment. China lacks heavy artillery and air-planes, without which such an offensive cannot possibly be carried out. The value of these spasmodic guerrilla raids, however, is rather as a means of preventing the Japanese to stay on in these occupied cities in peace. It also proves

the value of guerrilla warfare, when the ordinary methods of resistance are found unavailable. It indicates to me how large a part guerrillas will play in paving the way for the counter-offensive, when the time is ripe for such a move. It is important that we view these raids in their true perspective.

* * *

RAT plague!

Dr. Pollitzer, the epidemiologist, has issued a warning to-day that rat plague has shown an alarming increase in certain areas. The Director of the Epidemic Department of the National Health administration, Dr. W. W. Yung, has also issued a statement in which he says that the danger of plague invading Szechwan, Hupeh and Kweichow is great. This rat plague is a result of the Japanese waging bacterial warfare. It is brought about by dropping plague-infected rice on certain areas. This rice attracts rats, which as a result become infected with the disease and so it helps to spread plague to those areas. Chungteh is a rice producing district and plague is on the increase here because it spreads quickly along rice transportation routes. A sanitary cordon has however been set up and quarantines have been ordered at all important traffic centres. To-day, Dr. Yung, made a pathetic appeal for certain drugs in which China was deficient. He asked for sulphathiazole, of which there is only a limited quantity left and which is essential for the treatment of plague cases. Cyanogas was also practically finished. This was necessary to deal with the

infected rats and fleas.

How it frightens me. I wonder if Colonel Sokhey (of the Haffkine Institute) could help. Yes, China is becoming so dependent on India, now that it is gradually becoming isolated from the rest of the world.

At the same time, the Japanese News Agency, *Domei*, and its military spokesman alleged that poison gas and bacterial warfare have been resorted to by the Allied forces. At the press conference to-day, the official Chinese spokesman referred to this Japanese allegation and pointed out in a pathetic tone that the fact that the enemy fabricates such news carries a two-fold significance. It is an attempt on the enemy's part to counterbalance its own guilt in using poison gas in places like Ichang and Suiyan and in resorting to bacterial warfare in Chikiang and Honan. Secondly, it may well be a prelude to Japanese intention to resort to these methods in the next phase of the war. The spokesman then said: "We, therefore, wish to emphasize our warning to India and Australia who may be included among the next objectives of Japanese attack not to assume that Japan will not extend its inhuman warfare beyond China."

The military spokesman followed. He described the situation in Burma as "admittedly serious," but, he added, "there is no alarm among our people or the rank and file of our army. There will be no withdrawal from Burma, until the war is won by us." Asked whether this meant that Chinese forces would remain in Burma even to fight as guerrillas, the spokes-

man said—"they will remain to fight—as anything."

Japanese troops have reached the border of Yunan. Wanting, however, is still in Chinese hands. The Japanese may try to take Wanting and then head for Bhamo. Somehow, some of us have a feeling that the Japanese advance is going faster than we would like it to and faster than we hear of it.

I asked the spokesman whether in the event of an attack on the east of India, he visualized the possibility of Chinese forces taking part in the defence of India. The spokesman gave a cautious reply: "It is too early to say. But if the High Command strategy demanded it, China would not shirk its responsibilities."

He also gave the assurance that the air passage and mail service to India would continue without interruption, no matter what happened to Burma.

And some of the boys across the table smiled at me. They knew I was beginning to get a little worried about my going back.

* * *

The A. V. G. are in the news again. A message from somewhere in Yunan with yesterday's dateline, says that 8 Japanese planes were shot down by the A. V. G. in a dog fight over Paoshan along the Burma Road in western Yunan at noon on 5th May when 118 hostile planes raided various parts of Yunan. This latter part of the news is significant and not so hot. It is confirmed by a message from Kunming. Another message from Chengteh reports that "an unidentified number" of Japanese planes were sighted flying over

western Hunan, heading either for Szechwan, which is the Province in which Chungking is situated, or for Kweichow. Due to inclement weather, however, they were forced to turn back.

These reports seem to indicate that the bombing season has started again. It may be I'll still get a taste of an air raid while I am in Chungking. It also indicates that I may be right after all in forecasting that Japan may, against all expectations, turn its attention to tackling China in a big way, before it undertakes the invasion of India.

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My dates are getting confused. I am here, there and everywhere. So much is happening and I see a possibility of quitting before the due date. I don't like the way the Japs are moving and I certainly wouldn't like to risk squatting here for the duration. Already the boys are wanting to welcome me as one of the permanent crew. I pretend not to mind their jest, but right inside of me I am growing pink. To-day we had news that Wanting fell into Japanese hands three days ago. The Japs are now reported to be near Chefang, which is some 25 miles north-east of Wanting. I am now becoming more sure than ever before that the Japs are concentrating on an eastward thrust through Yunan. They are not going to bother about the Allied troops in the Mandalay sector. If any encirclement is to be done, it will be left to the other Japanese column which is moving up on the Irrawadi front. The position, therefore, is that the Japanese

in Burma have now come into contact, not only with the Chinese Expeditionary Force in Burma but also with the Chinese Army proper. And as the days go on, it appears to me as if they will come more into contact with the Chinese. In spite of the somewhat rapid advances made by the Japanese in their drive to and beyond Lashio, I am surprised to see that there is no feeling of discouragement as one would have expected in Chinese military and official quarters. Perhaps the reason for this confidence which the Chinese feel, in spite of Japanese advances, is because the Japanese have not dealt any really severe blow to the army of Chiang Kai Shek. The Chinese method of warfare often encourages the enemy to stick its neck out as long as it can stretch. The Chinese can then make frequent flanking attacks on such a Japanese column. This is part of the method of magnetic warfare in which the Generalissimo specializes and which has proved suitable to the Chinese army which lacks heavy artillery and adequate air strength in comparison to that of the enemy.

We tackled the Chinese spokesman at to-day's press conference. A few days ago, in answer to a question about the Burma Road, he had said that "the time was not at hand" when the road should be destroyed. Now, part of the road was in Japanese hands and it was still undestroyed. How could that be? It is of course possible that the Japanese advance was too quick and did not give the Chinese sufficient time to blow up the road. Or they may have some purpose

in not destroying the road. It is rather difficult to take the latter view. The spokesman estimated that the Japanese forces in Burma totalled about five divisions. He revealed that the vanguards of these Japanese forces penetrating into Yunan were mechanized units with air support. Every time we hear the words "air support," we realize that this war of 1939 onwards has been fought chiefly in and from the air. That is the one point in the Allied defence and offence on which it must concentrate its utmost.

In answer to a question about the raids by Chinese guerrillas, the spokesman confirmed the opinion I expressed yesterday that these raids must not be interpreted as the beginning of a counter-offensive. As he put it: "These are only guerrilla tactics to harass the enemy."

* * *

I HAVE received to-day certain confidential reports from well-informed sources which throw a new light on Japanese aims. It opens up a possibility of Japan starting war on a second front. This view is held on the strength of certain movements "in places other than China." This second front would be on what may be called the Russo-Japanese border with Siberia as the scene of action.

As soon as the Japanese column reached Lashio, those of us who were following the war in Burma closely, realized that a crucial point had been reached and the meaning of the Burmese campaign, as far as Japan was concerned, would reveal itself. The Chinese

military spokesman, when asked at the Press Conference on the day the fall of Lashio was admitted, as to which way he expected the Jap column to move from Lashio, said at that time that in his opinion the enemy would now move westwards with a view to encircle the Allied forces in the Mandalay sector. If that had happened, the Japanese campaign in Burma could be considered as having been undertaken with a view to acquire territory and sit on it. But, like Hitler, the Japanese have a preconceived plan according to which they act. So it is for the Germans the *Mien Kampf* and for the Japanese the Tanaka Memorandum. In this memorandum it is laid down that China must first be liquidated before the Japanese can attempt the conquest of the world.

Let us see what Japan has achieved and what it is aiming at.

The conquest of China has not worked out to plan. With the compromise effected between the Communists and the Kuomintang and led by Chiang Kai Shek, China has presented a tougher proposition than the Japs ever expected. Even European experts on China have proved wrong in their calculations that China would go down in five or six months after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war. While these experts judged the weight of Japanese metal correctly, they underestimated the weight of Chinese spirit. The result was that Japan has not only a Chinese army to cope with, but a whole nation which hinders Japan in every occupied town and village and which by

its guerrilla tactics has given the Japanese no peace in the occupied territory. The Japanese, therefore, have found that China was a much bigger campaign than they had bargained for. Japanese waited till they saw the appropriate opportunity, when the British fleet was not able to concentrate all its power in the Pacific, and then struck at Pearl Harbour, and the Pacific war began.

Then followed Japan's attempt to invade Burma. This was merely regarded as a piece of vandalism till the Japanese column reached Lashio and some of us began to say that we felt from what information we had gathered from confidential sources that the Japanese would now reveal their real aim in going into Burma, which they did and which is now becoming clearer every day. If Burma is wanted by the Japs, it is because, before undertaking the liquidation of China, the Japanese want to ensure that all means of communication to China are cut off, thereby preventing it from receiving any substantial help in materials from outside sources. This the Japanese appear to have succeeded in doing, for with the loss of the use of the Burma Road as a highway for goods from India, supplies to China are bound to get scarce. The Allies can still send aircraft and can probably fly over some commodities, but heavy artillery in which China is so deficient will still remain unavailable.

At the same time activity on the western part of China has now been resumed by the Japs. The whole plan is then clear and the expectations of those of us

who said that Japan's aim was to effect a huge pincer movement on China have been justified by events. To-day the Japanese column is too obviously going for China, leaving aside the lesser task of trying to encircle the troops in the Mandalay sector. Already the Western front of China has been pierced on the Yunan border. The Japanese have gone into the Burma Road proper. And they have resumed bombing over China. While attention is being paid to China, India is likely to get a breathing space from a large scale invasion. Moreover, after the failure of the Japanese to land in Ceylon and in Australia, the Japanese have hardly shown any serious desire to attack India proper. Periodical attempts at infiltration into the east of India are bound to be made sometime or other, but a large scale offensive is obviously reserved first for China.

Now all this is not without reason. The war in Europe has largely influenced Japanese policy. To my mind there is considerable co-ordination in the Axis plans. Somewhere and at some time Japan wants to meet Germany. The meeting through the Caucasus *via* India appears to be a little far-fetched. Therefore, another meeting is envisaged by the Axis.

While this has been the Axis plan, it has now become clear that the war has taken a different turn on the Russo-German front from that which Germany had expected. Hitler's forces have been hard pressed by the forces of Timoshenko. If a rout sets in and Germany is driven back from Russia, then Germany is

likely to be driven out of other places in Europe as well. The pace of Allied production is being quickened every day. America, when it has come to the question of delivering the goods, has kept up to schedule. The British long-range policy of making every bomb tell on a military target has achieved more than the indiscriminate bombing in which Germany indulged with a view to crush morale. The result of all this is that Hitler's forces are beginning to get hard pressed on the Eastern European front. The Allies have concentrated on that one aim, as has been proved by the corresponding lack of air support given to Singapore, Malaya and Burma. Even China has got resigned to the idea that it can only fight a defensive war, as T. F. Tsiang had said, leaving the offensive to the Naval Powers. But it is clear that before the Naval Powers, *i.e.*, Britain and America, can undertake an offensive, they must be free from commitments in the Atlantic and the North Sea and the English Channel. This can only happen after the defeat of Hitler, so that the war against Japan proper must wait till the war against Germany is over.

If that is the Allies' plan, as it must be, for it is the only common sense strategy, then Japan must act with a view to help Hitler somewhere. To take India now, assuming that Japan could, would be from the point of view of military strategy a waste of time and energy. *The only way Japan can help Germany is to open a new front against Russia through Korea and Manchuria, striking at Siberia.*

Before Japan can do this it must relieve the 600,000 Japanese troops now locked up in occupied China. Japan can only do that if it can conquer China or overthrow the Chungking Government. That is why Japan must turn to China first.

Such is my analysis of Japanese aims. Reports received here indicate that the Soviet Government are not unaware of Japan's immediate attention. And the Soviet Government can be relied upon to have acted on that knowledge. If this analysis is correct it places a different complexion on the war than that which we receive from official quarters. It means that though it is necessary to think in terms of the defence of India, we should go further and think also in terms of the defence of China. The whole war may pivot on whether Japan can open this new front in time to relieve Hitler. What are we going to do to counteract this? That is the question of the hour.

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A REPORT appears in this morning's *Iche Pao,* the Catholic Daily in Chungking, of an interview given by Dr. Kung on the international situation. Referring to the Soviet-Japanese relations, Dr. Kung is reported to have said "War between Russia and Japan is inevitable." Dr. Kung then goes on to make the suggestion that, for the sake of herself, Soviet Russia ought to let her air bases be used by the Allies so as to eliminate "the great menace in the Far East."

There are other happenings which also support this possibility of a Russo-Japanese outbreak in the

near future. The Tokyo radio reported the other day the presence in Tokyo of the arch-puppet, Wang Ching Wei. It seems plausible that if Japan wants to open a second front, it would obviously have to be through Korea and Manchuria. Add to that the fact that there are movements elsewhere, of which reports have been received here, to corroborate this evidence of the possibility of a forthcoming conflict, and you have an opportunity to make an intelligent forecast of the future course of the war. There also appears to be more activity in Northern China. Taken in conjunction with the drive the Japanese are making through Yunan, it all seems to indicate very clearly that the Japanese want to force a decision in China. If pressure could be brought upon China on two sides, the Japanese feel they would be altogether in a better position. The whole thing appears to support the theory of a gigantic pincer movement directed at China. Japanese strategy in Burma seems to be concentrated more on cutting off China from the outside world than on the conquest of Burma for the sake of itself. It also explains why the Japanese turned so quickly eastward from Lashio and tackled the Burma Road.

Yet with all these problems on its mind, the attention of Chungking seems to have shifted temporarily today from the war in Burma and China to the great naval battle that is waging near the Solomon Islands. Each time there is news received here of an Allied offensive, such as the bombing of Tokyo and now this naval action off the Solomon Islands,

Chungking seems to clench its fist and bite its lower lip, even as the French used to do in the last war when they said: "*On les aura.*" We shall have them! That is roughly the predominant spirit in China today. No one can take away from these Chinese people the credit of having hung on grimly to the defence of their country, sometimes even against the heaviest odds. But for their determination to resist Japan, the Allies today would have had a tougher proposition to tackle in the Far East. It has, therefore, been really inspiring to live amongst such a people even for a short while, and to imbibe what one can of their spirit.

War is a very real thing in this part of the world. It is in the very blood-stream of the nation. People think and live and eat and move about in terms of war. How different it all is from the Chungking which I had pictured to myself while I was still in India. Of course I knew that China had been at war for over four years, but then India had also been at war for nearly three—so I was told. India had a war effort of which we were asked to be proud. Now and again I had seen parades on the *maidan* in India and smart girls dashed about in smart uniforms and they were pretty to watch. I remember hearing Englishmen sing their songs *Roll on the Barrel* and *Daisy Daisy*. My petrol was rationed in India because India was at war—so I was told—and I had sometimes to travel by bus. Since I left, I hear that they have even installed a National War Front! A National War Front which was led by the deputy leader of the

European Group! A National War Front which would, alas, be permanently at the base. I think when I go back I will realize that India only thinks it is at war.

China is at a different sort of war. It is the real war—the war that requires a different sort of war effort. Here in Chungking they have given up so much of what we in India would like to call "necessities." The whole approach of the Chinese people is different. Sacrifices are so normal but whatever is given up is hardly felt by those who give. Chinese government officials are taking as pay just about enough to keep them going. More of them have lost all they had in the shape of possessions and land. But there is no moaning of one's plight, no lamentation, no wasting of time on pitying each other. They are content with what they have, and content to take and share what there is. For this is a nation at war.

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Minister Chang of the Department of Communications sent me an invitation to dinner through Votaw, the American who was once a professor. I went to his little house at the top of a number of steps. He gave me the nicest "foreign meal" I have had in Chungking. It almost felt strange to eat fried fish with tartar sauce and to handle a knife and fork after a long time. He had also invited his younger brother, and wife and three other people, one smartly dressed modern Chinese lady, her husband and another man, all of whose names I have forgotten, but I was

almost certain it was Pang or Chang or Chao or Pao. In between courses, I went over to shoot my five minutes despatch to All-India Radio. Felt so pleased with myself, being pushed to work as I am now and to have a chance of making some contribution, however small, to moulding the thought and opinion of my country.

Chang asked me how India would react to opening up another road, perhaps through Tibet. I pointed out that it was a matter more for the Government and military authorities to decide rather than the people of India. Thinking about it now, I find that answer must have disappointed him, for it was not only the Government that matters, but also the people of India, who would after all supply the labour, and as India would react and get enthused at China's call for help, so would such a road be built.

I talked for a long while with Chang, much of which I would not like to reproduce. He has a strange position in the executive Yuan, for although he is a member of the Cabinet, he is the only man in it who does not belong to the party. He dislikes politics. He was originally a banker, but apparently his services are of value to his country and that explains his inclusion in the Cabinet in charge of so important a portfolio as Communications.

His brother and his brother's wife, who are the younger Changs, are charming people. I have seen them again and dined with them at their beautiful little house which overlooks the river. At night with

the little lights reflected in the water, it looks as if a shimmering piece of sequin-cloth was spread over the valley. It made me forget so much. As I leant over the balcony of their house I found a peace within myself—a peace that passeth all understanding. It was one of those moments when I found I could stand aloof and away from the rest of the world, feeling a detachment even in attachment, like a drop of water that retains its individuality as it trickles gently over a lotus leaf. The Changs—all of them—are like China—all of it—hospitable. Even though I had met them before, they greeted me with the words: "We welcome you into our home." As I heard these words, I understood something of the grace of living of an old civilization, which belonged to China, when much of the rest of the world consisted only of barbarians. I also understood the meaning of the fellowship of man. It was essentially an Oriental hospitality, something akin to that of the Beduin who greeted you in his tent on some desert strand. It was a different sort of hospitality from that to which I had been accustomed —"Mr. and Mrs. So-and-So request the pleasure of your company to...Short coat."

With the Changs, after dinner that night, I went *bummel*-ing, as the Germans say. Our first halt was at an old-fashioned Chinese theatre, where the play was an old-time drama of a warrior and his wife. The plot as explained to me was so naive. It seems the warrior had been away sixteen years and returned from the field of battle one day to find a

man's pair of shoes in his wife's bedroom. The climax or anti-climax was reached when he discovered that they were of his own son, who had now grown up to be a man. It was a theatre of the old days. The old Vic of Chungking! The Chinese Shakespeare or Marlowe. In many ways it closely resembled the Elizabethan stage with its asides and its chorus. The symbolism resembled that of the drama of the Renaissance. In some parts it even took you as far back as the old Morality Plays. Chang, the younger, made a very good interpreter, and he seemed so keen on interpreting to me, whom he regarded, I think, as a fellow Oriental, something of the meaning of the art of his country. He explained to me also how, in painting, it was presumed that the picture was drawn looking down from the air. Consequently, Chinese pictures always included some part of a mountain. That was the traditional conception of the purpose and meaning of art in China.

We moved from there to the theatre of to-day, at which was running a modern play called "Twenty-four Hours in Chungking." In its setting, the stage reflected a strong Russian influence. I could have sworn they were playing something from Chekhov. Here it was not China that was speaking through the players. It was the International Theatre in which humanity of World War II was thinking loud. It had a single stage-setting throughout the three Acts. It was grim and drab and grey even as Chungking itself was. It depicted the lives of people, gathered together in a

boarding house in war-time Chungking. It touched upon contemporary life. It portrayed a clash of interest and the reaction of two generations to the war. I suppose in a way it had propaganda value, though the propaganda, if at all, was of the type you found in Bernard Shaw and Ibsen. It would not come under Oscar Wilde's conception of art for art's sake. It was art for morality's sake. Art for the sake of building up morale in China's war. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say "for keeping up morale." The three prominent characters in it were that of a young girl, played by a modern Chinese girl, faintly resembling Diana Wyniard—but only faintly. The young man could have been played by John Gielgud. And the third was the modern villain—the trafficker in ammunitions. The Profiteer. The dirty dog. There was also a dumb girl, such as could be played by almost anyone on the London musical stage or even off the stage, without rehearsal. The rest of the cast was an old man and an old woman, but I forget what they were supposed to be.

When we looked in, it was already the end of Act II. The old man was very ill. I saw the whole of Act III, throughout which the old man was dying, till at the end I think he died. But as he died, above him on another floor of the same boarding house, a new life was born and one heard the first cry of a new born babe. So life, like the war, went on—which was, I suppose, the message of the play. There was also a soldier, a janitor and odd people who played

character parts and played them well. Judging from the continued laughter, the play seemed to have a streak of subtle humour running through it. Only once there was pronounced applause and Chang turned round to me and translated the dialogue. The hero, who was the young man, was asked by someone why he never changed the expression on his face and he replied:—"That expression will never change so long as we are at war. It is indelible, like the dark blue which you see on the clothes of people in the streets." That was China at war.

How grim it sounded!

It told me in a few words what I had come to learn all the way from India.

China was dead serious about its war.

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It is a wet and dreary evening, almost bitterly cold, so unlike the time of the year, the middle of May. It created the right sort of contemplative atmosphere to sit back and listen to Churchill's broadcast which came through late at night. Following upon the reference made to gas by the official spokesman in Chungking, who warned India and Australia the other day that Japan was capable of using gas beyond China, the British Prime Minister's warning to Adolf Hitler that gas on the Russian front would be construed as gas used against the British people, has come as a firm and determined move from Britain, which China applauded with equal enthusiasm. Gradually but surely it is being felt in Chungking that the various

nations which go to make up the Allied side are at last beginning to think and feel as if they were one indivisible democracy, which in this fight cannot be split up into different nations. For a long time China has pleaded for unification of command and strategy and now we are beginning to have a unification of feeling too, which is heartening for a people who have so long fought alone against Japanese aggression. Mr Churchill's speech and his warning to Hitler, therefore, has had a very heartening effect in Chungking. Made at the right time, and following upon the bombing of Tokyo and the blow struck against the Japanese fleets in the Coral sea, Mr. Churchill's fighting speech seems to echo the voice of China, who had through their great leader, the Generalissimo, only recently reiterated its determination to fight to the bitter end this war against the Fascist and totalitatian idea of life. It gives to the average man in Chungking that lead which he looks for and that feeling of confidence, which urges him on to greater and better things. The Generalissimo's broadcast of the other day and now the broadcast of Mr. Churchill seem to be like two book ends, between which will be found the best works of a freedom-loving people in so widely spaced an area as that from Coventry to Chungking. Between these two broadcasts is to be found the will to fight of two hemispheres. And interspersed with evidence of the first Allied offensives, they help to create a fresh determination among the people on the Allied side.

It is also felt in Chungking that Japan would have

to reconsider and replan its next moves owing to the loss it has suffered in its naval strength in the battle of the Coral Sea. As one important person here said to me this morning: "First the Japanese retreat from Ceylon, where they tried to force a landing, and now the frustration of Japanese plans in the vicinity of Australia must have upset their plans considerably." Japan will necessarily have to postpone such ambitious schemes as it may have about India. Obviously the Japanese cannot take the risk of dispersing their fleet. To maintain their strength in the Pacific they cannot now afford to have their ships straying to far-off waters. Therefore, the danger to India has been considerably lessened since the battle of the Coral Sea. Moreover, while in Burma the Japanese have been somewhat successful, they have certainly allowed the defence of India to be greatly strengthened in the meantime. Also, though Allied troops have often had to retreat in Burma, it was largely due to the odds against them having been very heavy and to the lack of essential support from the air. In the months that have gone, the position of India has greatly changed for the better. Ceylon, too, with the fresh troops that have been poured into it, is a different proposition. On the whole these last few weeks have greatly improved the Allied position, if one takes a long view of things. Such territory as has been ceded, has been given up with the least damage to Allied forces, both men and material. Japan, on the other hand, has found itself frustrated in two of its important

plans. It has failed to land in Ceylon. It has now failed to come to Australia. And the time it has lost in these two moves must be regarded as a definite gain for the democracies. That is roughly what Chungking thinks of recent happenings in various parts of the world.

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Up and down it goes.

A day of optimism and then another depressing day. This is a war of nerves for journalists all over the democratic world. To-day at the Press Conference, the military spokesman admitted the fall of Bhamo and Mityakina. In answer to a question he said that there was not much resistance offered at Mityakina as Allied troops were not concentrated in that area. To many of us who watched this advance closely, it didn't appear as if there was any resistance from us at all after Lashio.

The spotlight, however, is focussed on the Yunan border where the Japanese have been forced to retreat because of the successful counter-offensive by the Chinese troops. General Lungyun, the Governor of Yunan, in a statement at Kunming said that the situation was developing in favour of China and discredited the possibility of a Japanese drive towards Kunming: "There are thousands of Chinese troops in Yunan who were firmly resolved to drive out the invader."

But it doesn't mean a thing to me.

The military spokesman said that the furthest

point in Yunan which the Japanese had penetrated was about 12 miles north-east of Lungling, but as a result of the Chinese counter-offensive, the Japanese had been driven out some 30 miles and some Japanese forces had even retreated as far as Wanting on the Burma Road.

Elsewhere in Burma—from Taungy and Miemo—a Chinese column was moving northward trying with the help of Chinese troops in Yunan to encircle the Japanese column in the Lashio area. At the same time, the Japanese column on the Irrawadi was moving upwards trying with the help of Japanese troops at Lashio to encircle the Chinese in the Mandalay sector. The position in Burma appears to me to be like two incomplete circles which are overlapping slightly and which are trying to close in one before the other. The spokesman was unable to say which of the two movements would succeed.

The official spokesman of the day, that is the representative of the Government as distinct from the military spokesman, expressed the appreciation and gratitude of the Chinese Government for the air support that had been given to the Chinese forces both by the R. A. F. and the A. V. G. !

Well, well. Probably, it's just Chinese courtesy.

The spokesman said : "The trend of the war is that the enemy will not be allowed to rest or consolidate his position. *If our forces continue to receive air support from our British and American Allies*, such as they have given us with heroism and loyalty during the past

week, the object of not allowing the enemy to consolidate his position will be achieved."

The italics are mine. It's always this doggone IF !

Commenting on the battle of the Coral Sea, the spokesman said : "This naval action has given increased confidence to the Allied Nations as a whole that Japanese air and naval power can and will be destroyed at an early date. The Japanese," he added, "will probably stage a come-back, but they will come with reduced power. The war in the South Seas has definitely turned in our favour."

Mr. Churchill's speech also evoked great enthusiasm from the spokesman at the conference, especially Churchill's firm warning to Hitler about the use of gas on the Russian front. The spokesman said : "The chief reason why China has failed to stop Japan's use of gas and bacterial warfare is that as regards reprisals China has not been in a position to speak as Mr. Churchill is able to speak to Hitler."

In answer to a question, the spokesman revealed that China might give a similar warning to Tokyo, when the Allied position was such that it could strike at the heart of Japan and carry the war to Japan proper. In the meanwhile, the Allies were kept fully informed of the Japanese use of poison gas and bacterial warfare against China.

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HAD an interview this morning with a high British military official. Frankly, I went there expecting a dud interview or at best a pompous one. British

military officials, judging from those I had known in India, gave me that expectation. But this interview turned out to be a cut above the ordinary. Somehow China-at-war had been able to influence even the mind and thought of the Anglo-Saxons who came under its influence. All through this trip to Chungking—without exception—I have liked every Englishman with whom I have come into contact. A rare phenomenon for me. I feel certain it is not I who have changed nor has my outlook become more friendly and tolerant, but these men are so different. They have a sense of reality, a sense of proportion. However high their position may be, they have always made me feel as if even from me they have had something to learn, and with me something to discuss. They trust you—these Englishmen in China.

What a strange little office it was in which I went to see one of the more important high military officials of World War II. It looked like an outpost—an outpost of democracy, not of Empire, thank God. All through the interview he was so keen, so fervently pleading, so anxious to see that I carried back with me a correct impression of the needs of China. "Don't use my name for publication," he said, "but if you can impress upon any one in authority the need for restoring communication with China, you will really be doing something that will get us somewhere."

There was something in his voice that suggested that he had expressed these views to the Government of India and that he had experienced the same sort of

frustration which I too had known. "Everyone seems to talk about maintaining communications—but when ?"

I certainly couldn't answer that.

He pointed out to me also how there was a tendency these days on the part of the Allied press, in their enthusiasm to be friendly and appreciative, to write up and over-write the news from China. "That is doing China no good, because when it fizzles out, it makes a disappointing picture."

He was right. I had seen it happen in the case of the guerrilla raids which had been written up as the beginning of a general counter-offensive. Well, it just wasn't fair to China, because in the first place it made you expect more from China than you had a right to expect and to paint in your mind a much brighter picture of China-at-war than was justified by the circumstances. The result of such over-writing was that it made you withhold giving active and immediate help to the Chinese, believing that their position was so strong now that such help was not necessary.

We talked for a long time and he analysed the Far Eastern situation for me from a military standpoint. His analysis was very clear and simple. I think, however, it would be better to leave out many details of this interview, because unwittingly I might record here, some things which were only for my own clarification. All I would like to say is that if we in India—I refer to the press—could have

access to those highly-placed in office with the same ease and grace as in China, the tone of the Indian press would be so much different from what it is to-day.

Lunched with Watts after the interview. We went to a Moslem eating-house which was exceptionally clean as Chinese eating-houses go, and where the food was so different from the type which I was now getting accustomed to regard as Chinese.

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RODERICK MACDONALD and I went to a movie, Edward Arnold, Jean Arthur, Lionel Barrymore. James Stewart in *You Can't Take It With You.* As Roderick hadn't seen it before, he could not follow much of the dialogue which in this Chungking theatre was almost inaudible. But I remembered it and it was a strange feeling seeing this picture, now slightly worn out with years in a cinema house in Chungking.

Roderick still adheres to his theory that Fu, my man, is one of Tai Lee's Gestapo, "to keep watch over the movements of our friend from India." This is the theory propounded at great length by Roderick, every time he feels in the mood.

Roderick is feeling restless in Chungking and wants to get nearer the front. Wilkie, and Bossart, the Swiss, have already left for Burma, though I doubt if they got much time to look around. The campaign in Burma has sizzled like burning tissue-paper. Already reports are coming in of how General Stilwell hacked his way on foot, with an axe slung across his shoulder. Reports say that Beldon of *Time* is the

only correspondent near him. What a break for a man looking for a story!

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Back in time for the Press Conference. I asked the military spokesman whether he thought that the objective of the Japanese was to effect a big pincer movement on China as a whole. My reason for asking this question was that I felt that the Japanese had made a bee-line for Yunan after getting their foothold in Burma. Also there appears to be quite some activity in the Eastern parts of China which the spokesman confirmed. In fact he revealed that there were some twenty or thirty thousand enemy troops in that area and there was recently also a Japanese aircraft carrier in Hanchow Bay with over 30 planes. The spokesman also said that there were likely to be some operations in the eastern parts in the near future, but he held the view that unless these were accompanied by large-scale movements elsewhere, they would not be sufficient to constitute a pincer movement. The fact still remains that, judging from the details of the thrust into Yunan which were given to-day by the military spokesman, there seems a little too much attention paid by the Japanese to the Eastern part of Burma, which makes me feel that the lull which we have had on fronts in China proper, may suddenly give place to more activity on the part of the Japanese. The Japanese appear anxious to tackle China in the hope of relieving troops now busy holding and policing occupied territory in China and using them later to open another front to

tackle Soviet Russia.

About the two encircling efforts made by the Chinese and Japanese forces in Burma, the spokesman was unable to say which was making speedier progress. Both parties, he said, have to contend with difficulties —which appear to be difficulties of transport. In places the Chinese have succeeded in cutting off Japanese communication lines between Bhamo, Mityakina and Lashio.

Then for once the military spokesman tripped up to-day. The position in Yunan, he had summed up as a trial of strength. Earlier he had said that the chief cause of the setback in the Yunan section was the "superior numbers of the enemy." Later at the same Press Conference, he estimated the strength of the enemy as one regiment and two divisions.

Our ears pricked up. Guenther Stein of the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Christian Science Monitor* was the quickest to catch on.

"Am I right," he asked the interpreter, "in understanding that the enemy's strength was estimated by the spokesman as one regiment and two divisions?"

The interpreter translated the question back to the spokesman, who nodded his head.

"Am I to understand," Guenther Stein pressed the question, "that one regiment and two divisions of the enemy proved to be superior in numbers, as said by the military spokesman, in the operations in Yunan?"

The military spokesman felt a little uncomfortable

when the question was translated to him and for the first time he looked a trifle silly. But the young censor barely 23, who always attended these conferences, knew that this bit of bungling could not be let through. But he was so nice about it in his censorship that none of us pressed the point.

To my mind, therefore, the war in Burma is fast becoming the war in China and I feel that we will very soon have to look upon the two wars as one. Burma will very shortly be interesting only as the means of communication for the Japanese forces fighting China on China's eastern border.

* * *

EVEN here we collect good stories. There is the latest from fascist-ridden Italy as received first-hand from a Chinese who has managed to return here from somewhere in Europe. Knowing "the love" which the Italians bear Il Duce, the little Caeser is taking no chances. The old method of protecting himself was to wear a bullet-proof vest when stepping out. This is now out of date in modern Italy. Mussolini now adopts a new method of protecting himself. Whenever he wants to go out, he has the air-raid signal sounded and the people naturally make a rush for dug-outs leaving the streets safe and clear for Mussolini to do his running round. It is also good propaganda, because the Italians can always say that the enemy was successfully warded off and did no damage.

Good, wholesome Latin propaganda ! Of course

Col. Blimp would never stoop to such a low-down trick. By Gad, Sir, it wouldn't just be playing cricket.

* * *

I THREW a small dinner party at the *Kwan Sen Yuen* with the British Ambassador as my chief guest. I was a little hesitant in asking him—because after all I did not envisage the Ambassadors of England biting with newspapermen in the sort of pub which the *Kwan Sen Yuen* was. Actually, I had suggested the more austere *Chialing House*, where they gave some sort of a foreign meal, but Berkeley Gage assured me that Sir Horace would much sooner have a Chinese meal. I was delighted to feel so comfortable at the start. I invited T. F. Tsiang, Hollington Tong and Mrs. Tong, Jimmy Stewart and his wife Eleanor (not to be confused with the other Eleanor, of the U.S. !—as I always told her), and Stanley Smith and Gage.

As the dinner was given in the Chinese style, I was very particular that I should conform to the strictest rules of Chinese etiquette. Rules which were rigid, forbidding and foreboding. I had to run to Wong of the British Press Attache's office, who had the reputation of being an epicure on Chinese food to select the meal for me and to coach me up in little details, which was so essential on such occasions. Wong picked the meal and I must say he picked it beautifully. It was like a page out of Ling Yutang's *The Importance Of Living*, put into cffect.

A room was reserved for us, and down the corridors, as we arrived, there was much bowing, because it had

been whispered to them that the British Ambassador was to be in the party. And may be—I hoped—there was a little mistake in identity as to who this swarthy-complexioned, host was, which was myself.

Zafrulla Khan, India's representative, had not yet arrived, so the thunder was still mine and mine alone.

We sat at a round table, and as the guests came in we sipped tea and ate roasted coffee beans. Then we moved to the main dining-table—also a round table. As the host, I had to sit with my back to the door As the chief guest, Sir Horace sat opposite me. T. F. Tsiang sat on my right and Hollington Tong on my left. The two ladies sat on either side of the Ambassador and the boys fended for themselves. Rice wine was served, because wine was allowed at parties where there were "foreigners." Very soon we began to *gambe* each other. As far as I understood, *gambe* meant "bottoms up," though I felt it was rather a crude translation of so melodious a Chinese word. So Wong's chosen courses began to roll up and we continued to *gambe* all through the meal, as was the old Chinese custom.

At dinner T. F. told me that they were thinking of giving foreign correspondents an honorary rank in the Chinese army. He promised that I would not be forgotten even though I would have left China by then.

After the party I went with the boys to the *Sing Sing Café* for a hot chocolate. It was so nice to hear

a little jazz even if only from gramophone records. And I leapt up from my chair as I heard Don Azpiazu play in his own inimitable way *Wanna Lot Of Love*.

Wanna lot of love, that's my puzzle—so the words of the song ran. How true it was any time in any part of the world.

* * *

I HAVE been trying to do a little entertaining on my own, after being entertained so much by others. Took out Chang the younger and his wife, their friends, the Pans, and one or two others. It included one of the Directors of the Bank of China. The party was arranged by Chang at my request because I wanted to meet more interesting Chinese people before I left. As I was host, they took me to a very inexpensive Chinese eating-house known as *The Cave*. The food was exquisite. It was a sort of gourmet spot. Szechwan food at its best. Szechwan duck. A whole roast fowl which just melted in your mouth as if it were all butter. And yet the place was like a working man's eating-house. The Pans took us to their house for coffee afterwards. Pan was an enterprising man, about thirty-five, an official in the Ministry of Communications. He had only just been across to India on official work. His hobby was collecting seals. A seal in China is frequently used above your signature. Designing a seal was an art, and giving a seal to someone was a sign of great friendship. I have been promised one by a Chinese girl but I have to wait for it till the war is over. In a way it takes one back

to the days of the Roman Empire, the days of Ben Hur when in the arena of the gladiators, a woman was known to give her favour to a man. Or if you don't want to go so far back, to the Spain of yesterday. It doesn't matter in what age you meet this custom, but it's beautiful just the same.

Pan told me that seals, although they all bore just your name, usually bore a mark of the individuality of the artist who had designed them. They were supposed to reflect the personality of the man whose name appeared on the seal and of the man who designed it, or of the woman who knew him. It was something intensely personal. I got a seal made for myself, but it was cold and hard and I believe very proletarian in its execution. It's amazing to see these traits in a people who are engaged in a grim life-and-death struggle for existence.

What a compromise life is in China. A compromise between art and war, between philosophy and the reality of living, between ideals and grim facts, between hopes and despair, between yesterday and to-morrow.

* * *

ONE thing I have not forgotten. It is the haunting whistling of a bird that always hung around the house of the Changs. It is the legend that this bird guided one of the ancient kings of China back to Szechwan. I could hear it too. It kept saying at short intervals: *Burro guicho*—Better go back. Better go back. Better go back.

Back when?—I wondered, with communications getting more and more dangerous, now that Mityakina was in Japanese hands.

And back to what?

* * *

Had a surprise invitation from the Australian Minister at the Legation. It was for lunch. Almost as soon as I got it, I could get a taste in my mouth. A taste of gin and lime, or beer or what have you? Even a cup of coffee, maybe. The Legation was across the river. Sir Frederick Eggleston, the Australian Minister, had sent me his car. I crossed the ferry in the car, looking important with a diplomatic number-plate on that large Buick. The flag of Australia fluttered in the wind. And little Chinese boatmen looked upon it as a friendly flag. There was a long drive at the other end over a beautiful mountain road and then to spoil it all a long flight of steps—some three hundred between me and the promised glass of beer. Promised? Yes, I promised myself a sip of this rare war-time beverage.

Sir Frederick was not the sort of Australian, who, like Mr. Curtin invoked the blessings of God that Australia should remain "white." A pleasantly aging man, carrying a stick because of his gouty foot, he had seen too much of two wars to pray to God for anything more than peace on earth and the freedom of men. The Legation had chosen this out of the way spot, because it got a little tired of being plastered by Japanese bombers, who did not respect any neutrals—

and Australia was neutral up to the outbreak of the Pacific war. Sir Frederick had two young men assisting him at the Legation. They made a grand team. The enthusiasm of youth tempered by the mellow tolerance of age.

We talked about India and the future, and I was surprised to get so attentive a hearing on so controversial a subject. Somehow, Whitehall does not even keep the Dominion Office informed of the true state of affairs in India.

The lunch was good. Too good. Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and a sweet with cream in it. The living room was surrounded by books, for books were a luxury in this part of the world. How ideally suited this place is for reading. One can catch up on one's wasted youth if one spent one's later days on these mountains of China, surrounded by the literature which had escaped reading in the earlier days.

I heard as I got back to the press hostel that my plane was due to leave early next morning and I was advised to take it while the going was good. My visit to Chungking had to come to an abrupt end. Now that I was going I felt sorry to leave. China is like that. It makes you long for it once you have left it. So everyone has told me and I dare say I will be no exception.

I went to my last party in China. A tea-party it had to be! Tea doesn't leave you. It haunts you. This tea-party was given either by the Sino-American Culture-Promoting Institute to the Sino-British Culture-

Promoting Institute or *vice versa*. It didn't make much difference who played host, because the people who attended it were the same. There was the Chinese official military band playing music in one corner of the garden, the usual "foreign" crowd, the usual Kuomintang officials, the usual speeches all confident of our "eventual" victory and the usual national anthems of Britain, America and China, to which we all stood to attention.

Colin Macdonald told me afterwards that I appeared restless during the strains of *God Save The King*, which was not intentional nor intended to be rude. The Englishman in China had been so nice to meet, I would never consciously do anything to offend him. But I suppose by force of habit acquired in India one did get restless at the British National Anthem. It connoted so much in terms of India. It reminded an Indian always of 150 years of British rule... RULE... Jallianwala Baug, General Dyer, the Crawling Order, Mr. Amery, the Englishman in India, all those sad days when my countrymen smarted under the humiliation of enslavement. Yet I wanted Britain to win the war, though not to win to perpetuate her domination over India. It was difficult to disentangle all these conflicting emotions. So maybe that was why I was restless.

I said good-bye to a number of friends. Yes, they were my friends, short though my visit had been. They made me feel that they did like me while I was there and that they would miss me when I had left.

It was different from the feeling at home, where friendship had so often come to be a misnomer for a blasé acquaintanceship. Maybe I had got sentimental about China, but I was in the mood for getting sentimental. My life was changing. I had begun to look ahead. I had become conscious of an inner, latent desire to do something, after many months of inaction which I had cause to regret. But somehow I never regret anything. It is a sign of mediocrity to regret and I hate mediocrity. My father had once remarked about me that I was at my best when driven to the wall. So I supposed I liked getting my back against a wall, if only for the thrill of fighting back. Once before in *I Go West* I had written about feeling the urge to go beyond the highest mountain, beyond horizons, beyond time and space. But what is there beyond? That didn't matter, so long as I felt the urge to go beyond.

I was feeling that urge right now. It was a grand feeling. If only I could keep it up.

I broadcasted as usual, giving no indication that it was my last broadcast from Chungking—XGOY—the Chinese International Broadcasting Station at Chungking, with "Lousy" Peng with his Sino-American accent, and the straight-haired Chinese girl, who always announced in Chinese, sounding something like: "X-G-O-Y- Chung-ching-cho-kwo-que-ching-chong..." and the Siamese announcer with gold in his teeth and the strange Dutch officer, who was always writing at a desk, whenever I went to the Station. XGOY which

had none of the facilities of the Bombay Broadcasting Station and about a tenth of the staff, but which managed to get more across in half the time and where it was always a pleasure to broadcast! XGOY—the station that was turned towards the U. S.! XGOY, the station of tomorrow! I said good-bye to all that.

* * *

BACK at the hostel, the boys were waiting to strip me of all that would be useful to them. I sold the lot to them at cost, or price of replacement. Harrison bought my shoes, dressing gown, and my wrist-watch. Pepper took my pair of pyjamas. Colin my shirt, my mirror, my bath towel. I distributed typewriter ribbons, paper, specially carbon paper, as a sort of big-hearted bonus! What a life we lived, that a sheet of carbon paper became a sort of priceless gift. Liao who was in charge of the dining-room wanted to "buy" my Pleydell overcoat, but that I was not selling, because it could never be replaced, but I presented him with my window-curtains, which though they were of the most horrid, black, cheap cloth had cost over fifteen rupees. There was a fight over who should get the tooth paste that was left in the tube, the little bit of shaving cream left over and the unused bar of Lifebuoy soap. Colin wanted to buy my one and only suit-case, but I didn't relish the idea of returning to India carrying a bundle. The blue fibre-suit-case, I felt, was essential to the air-travel of a 'War-time special correspondent' and I

knew it would give me some status at the Calcutta Customs barrier, which a bundle would not. So I hung on to the suit-case, which after all had accompanied me on my first really worthwhile assignment. In many ways I felt a little embarrassed about these transactions, never having been a merchant. But at the same time I could not afford to part with them as gifts, nor did the boys want it that way. But to them it made so much difference.

* * *

WE sat and drank local vodka in my room. It was nearing midnight, when Jimmy Wei came rushing to my room with a parcel in his hand, marked urgent, which had come from the headquarters of the Generalissimo. It bore the three crosses which in Chinese signified urgency of delivery. It had pulled Jimmy out of bed. The parcel was from Madame Chiang and it contained a souvenir which I valued very much. But I was so sad that as I was leaving earlier than I had expected, I would miss my interview with the Generalissimo.

I packed and turned in. Roderick Macdonald will be on the plane with me tomorrow. He is going to Kunming and then trying to get to the Yunan border.

A few hours later, Professor Chi was at my bedside, telling me it was time to get up to catch the plane. He brought with him a large packet which he said had come late last night from the Headquarters of the Generalissimo and a book of Madame's writings which

she had sent me. I had gained much "face."

I packed these on top of the suit-case and, before long, Roderick and I were on our way to the airport. Fu and Lee and another boy were carrying our trunks. It was a grey morning and the world was still. The guns of World War II seemed to have ceased firing.

Roderick was in great form. He was now quite sure that Fu, my man, was a Colonel in the Gestapo of Tai-Lee. And Fu was carrying my case on his shoulder.

"What a great thing," Roderick said, "it is to be a correspondent. In China you get Colonels to carry your bags!"

Roderick was fooling, but I felt so good as I looked back at the month that had gone and the life I had led during that time, so different to the frustration I had felt in India. Just before I left I had met Galvin again, who had come to Chungking with Lord Hood of the British Ministry of Information, and Galvin wanted me to stay on. He was so nice and his encouragement was always an inducement to do something more. But China for the duration was not after my heart. I wanted to come back to India and then maybe push on elsewhere and see the war at other places. This was a World War, remember?

So we got to the airport. Walking up to the top of Pas Hsein Junctu and then taking a rickshaw downhill. We were early. The plane had still time to leave and so we settled down to a breakfast of fried eggs. People were gradually beginning to fill up that

Customs shed, which was also the airport office. Some "party man" was also leaving, so we gathered, and a lot of hangers-on had come to see him off, even though he was only going as far as Kunming. *The party*—that was the dissappointing thing about China today. I wanted to see more of *the Country* and less of the party. This was a period of transition, so I was told everywhere in China. Yes, for China it was a period of transition—a transition from the chaos, such as it was yesterday, through the mediocre tutelage of Kuomintang officials, still too obviously conscious of interests, vested and personal, to the eventual promise of communism in the future. Liberty, equality, fraternity—that was the goal in view, though right now it lôoked a little distorted with this near picture of a Kuomintang official and his Yes-men, paying lip-service to him.

In the middle of breakfast, we were interrupted for a customs examination. Roderick was in uniform, so he had no trouble at all. But they wanted to give my bags the once-over. I opened them. The Customs official's eyes caught sight of the large envelope which was right on top. He muttered some incoherent remarks and proceeded to open it. Out of it came the Generalissimo's picture, autographed for me. His eyes popped out when he read the inscription. He stiffened. He knew he had lost face, in asmuch as he had asked to be opened the baggage of a man, who carried the Generalissimo's portrait, with the Generalissimo's 'chop' and his autograph. Hurriedly he put it

back. He closed my bag without any further examination. The Customs official bowed low in my presence. He helped me to carry my bags to the corner. I looked equally grave and important, as if to say: "You have just averted a diplomatic incident." Roderick played up very well, as if he might have been my personal, confidential correspondent. I put on my large overcoat, which looked like the overcoat of some unknown cavalry, of which I was a very high official, travelling incognito.

The news had spread through the shed. And when I stepped into the plane, the soldier on guard tapped the butt of his rifle in salute. I left China feeling so important.

It was a grand feeling, slightly shortlived, for the weather got very bumpy and I could not contain the egg-breakfast very long. Winnie, the air-hostess looked pathetically at me every time I made a dash for the brown-paper bags.

I had left China behind.

III *Great Eastern Hotel,*
Calcutta.

There was a slight consternation as I walked into the lobby of the *Great Eastern*, with two large coolie hats tucked under my arm. Englishmen turned round at their tables where they were sipping their whisky-sodas to look at another little "native" from somewhere or other. Burmese evacuee? Chinese peasant? What was I? They wondered. Only a couple of war correspondents who had known Chungking realized where I had come from.

Passing through the Customs at this end was so different from my experience in China. In China a Custom's official used his brains.

At the hotel they told me at first that there was no room, but in the end they found me a room with a bath. I phoned to Bombay to tell my people I had returned. I phoned to Arthur Moore, who told me his going to Chungking was now certain. *The Associated Press* came for a little information on China. R. M. arrived in a short-sleeved shirt and with a Manilla, to keep me company at my first "foreign" meal in India! We went to *Firpo's* where I ordered a cup of coffee *before* dinner, much to the astonishment of the head waiter.

I think I ate a little too much.

We walked down Chowrangee. It was a hot and sticky night. Pitch dark because of a rigid black-out. The streets were very quiet and deserted.

At the *Grand*, we decided to stop for a drink. Someone tapped me on the back and as I turned round I saw Teddy Weatherford, the negro pianist of the *Taj*.

"Where have you bin, Bo' ?" Teddy spluttered in his broad Southern accent, shaking me by the hand, till I nearly came loose at the joints.

"I've just got back from Chungking," I replied.

"What king ?"

"China, Teddy, China."

"You don't say !" Teddy showed his amazement. "Isn't it dead or summthin' ?" he continued.

"Not dead, Teddy. It's at war, that's all."

"Fancy," he said, and there was a pause.

An awkward pause.

I spoke again. "What do you think of the war, Teddy ?"

"Bo' I'm neutral...I've got married you know ...Yeah...It's fun. Join you later."

And he dashed away.

We went in. R. M. ordered a drink. At other tables near us were numbers of newly-recruited box-walas in uniforms with pips on. They were laughing. They were singing. They were still emptying bottles of beer. The war had not come to India.

As Teddy took his seat at the piano, there was a roar and as he struck the ivory keys, the crowd broke

out in song.

"*Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer now*. . .something—something. . .*a bicycle meant for two*."

Down on the Yunan border, the Japs were driving in tanks, while the war-time boxwala Captains were content with their bicycles meant for two.

Down in Burma, Stilwell was hiking his way to join a rescue party.

Down in China. . .

What's the use ?

We were retreating "according to plan," taking strategic positions "according to plan."

There must be something wrong with our plans somewhere.

* * *

I FOUND out that we had flown very high on our way back. The pilot told me he had to zig-zag because the mountains were inaccessible in parts. I will not give details of my flight back, because it may contain information which should not be divulged. I will only repeat here what I said before that the CNAC is the toughest air-line there ever was and so long as there is a plane to fly, these boys will keep the line of communications unbroken. With the loss of the Burma Road as the link between India and China, the air remains the only highway.

* * *

NEXT morning I went to Cook's and the bank. The Chinese dollars which I had on my person could not be changed. There was difficulty in getting a

berth by the evening train. The air-contioned coach was out of the question, I was told.

Had a haircut. The barber told me that everything was all right in Calcutta, because there were British soldiers to defend them. "They can stop any trouble. We've had trouble here before and as soon as the military came out, it's O.K. That's what I say," he told me very confidently.

"What trouble have you had here ?"

"Not now," he said. "But years ago, when there has been communal trouble. After all the Japanese don't mean much to me. There were some Japanese hairdressers here, but we closed them down."

The Battle of Asia, my dear Snow, should have been written in terms of Japanese hairdressers. But may be you and I don't know nothing.

* * *

At lunch I ran into M——. He is an important Air Force man now. A number of blue stripes decorated his shoulders. He had been in the campaign in Burma. He seemed so sad about it all. The men had fought so well, he said. But you can't do anything unless you can pound from the air. This was a battle that was being fought in the air. Courage and the will to fight must be backed up by materials and planes, and if we had lost Burma it was not because our men did not fight hard enough.

He had seen the war in Burma. He was not one of those B. F.'s who thought that the war could be fought by speeches. He had learnt to appreciate the

strength of the enemy, and though determined to go on fighting, he felt that a new approach to the war in the East was essential to our victory. The Japs were hard fighters. They were not to be scorned. They were a powerful enemy, deadly, brutal, savagelike, tenacious. They were not as our early propaganda had painted them—little Japs who would run away, we thought, at the sight of the *Prince of Wales.*

It was a different Japan that stood at our doors. A Japan that wanted to dominate the East, even as Germany wanted to dominate the West. The future of the world would be in jeopardy if these men ever triumphed over the forces of democracy. We know it now, but still so many thousands had yet to be convinced. Why didn't our departments of propaganda do something?

IV *Nepean Sea Road, Bombay*

I CAUGHT the Jubbulpore mail. The platform was crowded out. "Travel Only When You Must," apparently had no meaning. Government were making frantic pleas for keeping the means of transport clear, but the Haves were doing very little to set an example. Restaurant cars were being converted into carriages and ambulance coaches. But the saloons and the special trains of those in high places were still idling at shunting.

The air-conditioned carriage was full, but the Hon'ble Mr. So-and-So was travelling with two tickets in order to have two berths to himself. What an example to set to India ! So long as you could afford to waste space in railway carriages, the Railway allowed you to do so. What was the meaning of the appeal for less travel ?

* * *

IN the compartment with me was a pilot officer from the RAF. He was a London Bank clerk once. Now he was...he wasn't sure whether he was fighting for democracy, or whether it was an empire he was called to defend. He was mighty sore to hear that someone

had reserved two berths in the air-conditioned coach, while he sweated in the fullness of an Indian summer. His words were choice as he described the kind of man —an Englishman—who could do such a thing in the midst of a World War.

* * *

LET me look back on it now. So many details I have failed to record, because that one month was full of details. I dined with Chow again a day or two before I left. I saw Kung Peng again. We roamed through the streets of Chungking at night. We drank hot chocolate at the *Sing Sing*. We listened to the music of the Dons— Barretto and Azpiazu. We walked in the slush and the rain. We discussed the grim present and the unknown future of China. We planned the days ahead when my country too would rise to the full stature of its freedom. That Chow En-Lai and Mao Tse Tung and Chuh Teh would be part of the China of tomorrow was quite certain. That was a prediction made by those who had gone to China before me, by those who were there with me and there seemed no doubt in my mind about it. The conflict in China was clear. Its result was a question of time. The Kuomintang as a party had no future. The Communists had. It was only because of one man, Chiang Kai Shek, that the Kuomintang had remained the party in power. Chiang was the one outstanding fact that no one could deny. His leadership was supreme. It inspired every Chinese, no matter what his party. He was destined to be their liberator from

the Japanese. It didn't matter that he happened to be associated with the wrong party in the process of liberation.

The conflict in India was more involved. First there was the conflict between India and Britain. Then between us Indians there were so many factions, which were getting sharply defined as time went on. Gandhi was the only all-India leader, but even he may not get a majority in Bengal. Jinnah disputed the leadership of the Congress and claimed a seventy-million Muslim following. There was no harm in claiming it. Harrison had claimed a two-million listening public. And no one could actually dispute such claims. So it was with Jinnah. And it paid the British Government to regard Jinnah's claim as based on facts. Other Indian leaders were more or less provincial leaders. Vallabhbhai Patel had Gujerat to dominate. Some had the United Provinces. Some had the Frontier. Only Jawaharlal had an all-India following, but it was not so much from the masses as from the intellectuals. Jawaharlal's mass following was only through Gandhi. What could we forecast of an India where there was likely to be so much conflict in the future. Conflicts within conflicts. A future in which we would have to take a back seat and watch party men muck up things, even as we were watching the officials of the Government of India muck up the war effort.

Looking back also did I realize that it was the people as a whole that held out the promise of the

future, by the realistic way in which they were fighting in this long-drawn war.

* * *

In some of the articles I wrote from China in which I tried to describe war-time living conditions, I mentioned the shortage of so many commodities and little luxuries which were almost prohibitive in price. However, when I came back, I was met with laughter from my friends, who must have had a distorted sense of humour. They laughed at me and said : "Poor boy, he got no strawberry jam." They laughed as all those will laugh in this country till it comes to them.

The people in China did not laugh. That was a privilege which five years of bitter fighting had denied to them. They had known too much of suffering. They had seen too much of death and destruction. They had been bitterly disillusioned by those they had counted upon. They knew that the war they were fighting gave them little time to laugh. They remembered the war at Nanking, at Shanghai, at Hankow. They remembered the massacres which are now pretty familiar to the world. They remembered the brutal, dastardly bayoneting of little children. They remembered the humiliation which their women had been made to suffer. They were in no mood for laughing.

How different it was in India !

The Begum of Somewhere-or-other had given a party in Hyderabad, apparently for the war-effort,

where the guests measured buffalo tails by starlight. So said a Society paper in its May issue in a special despatch from their special correspondent in Hyderabad. The editorial of that same paper was headed : "What, No Beer ?" That was India's war effort—a story told in bridge and *mah-jongg* drives, in pretty uniforms and war charities.

I remember once at the Taj four young Englishmen sitting at a table on their own, while next to them sat a slightly elderly Englishman with a grossly overdressed girl. The latter got up almost with the first few bars of every dance, encored each time for more and hopped all round the floor. The four young men watched this neighbour of theirs. They, who had known the real war, were silent spectators, while the boxwalas of Bombay were hopping on the floor of the Taj. At last the four men decided to leave, but as they were leaving, they left a note for their neighbour. It was pinned on to his veal cutlet with a fork. I leant over and read it. It said : "Carry on, friend, WE are fighting the war for YOU." I'll never forget that note. But it has made little difference to the Englishman, for he is still dancing at the Taj, while his country is up against a wall.

* * *

SOME people want to know something concrete about the Eighth Route Army. There is a mistaken feeling that the activities of this Red Army have come more or less to a standstill and that nothing very much is really happening in the north of China. For those who

would like to have a detailed account of the sort of actions in which the Eighth Route Army was engaged in one single month, I reproduce in the Appendix a special despatch from a certain point in North China, which sums up the results of the Eighth Route (now known as the New Eighteenth Route) Army during the month of January 1942. I have retained it more or less in its original form as given to me by Chow En-Lai.

This Eighth Route Army is not fooling around, believe me. This is not just a war-time corps that is dancing round in pretty "costumes." This is the core of the China of tomorrow. When you bear in mind that these men fight only with what ammunition they can get hold of by raiding the enemy's depots and that its sick and wounded are healed more by God and nature than science and medicine, you begin to feel they are the men of destiny—China's destiny. Nor can they be called an army of mercenaries, for they get only a single dollar—a Chinese dollar, worth a little over three annas—as their month's pay. They eat and live on the land and what the people grow and give them. It is something more near "soul force," though not of the non-violent type. It gets its driving force from within. Bergson might have called it *elan vitale.*

Elan vitale at three annas a month! The spirit of the Eighth Route Army is the very life-force of China of the North.

* * *

I AM asked by everyone I meet: "What will

happen to China?" Bereft of heavy equipment without adequate air support, without sufficient tanks and heavy guns it looks a gloomy prospect from the military point of view. However hard-pressed they may be in the next few months, I know for certain that the Chinese will never throw in the towel. Those people somehow don't surrender. When positional warfare becomes impossible they break up and fight as guerrillas, because they have the will to fight ingrained in their soul and their hatred for the Japanese is in their blood. They have borne the brunt of aggression in the Far East when we were applauding Munich and appeasement. Any country that has gone through so much has the right to feel disheartened at being left alone to face the brunt of the fighting. And if my reading of China is correct and I take the responsibility of saying it only in my name without attributing it to any Chinese official, I would say, what I have not said since I have returned, that China feels disheartened at the way it has been left to fight her war which is an essential part of the world struggle.

The word "disheartened" is used with acknowledgement to the Commander-in-Chief in India. He used it to describe the feelings of the High Command on the Burma campaign. But has not China got more justification to feel disheartened at the way Malaya has been lost, at the way Singapore fell in spite of assurances, and at the way Burma was sacrificed at the altar of experience. And these countries fell because there was no means of aerial defence, and no

means of aerial attack could be spared for these campaigns.

And yet a squadron of a thousand bombers could be found to attack Cologne in a single day and the Air Marshal of England says that he hopes in the near future that a similar squadron will be able to deliver the message to Germany every day.

When I read news like this, which is no doubt encouraging, I begin to realize what the Generalissimo must be feeling when he said recently in a broadcast to the American people "Give me ten per cent. of the equipment put out by America and I will give you the results." Very tactfully, very dignifiedly he points out that morale alone cannot win this war.

"Morale must be supplemented by mechanized equipment if victory is to be attained." When I hear a pathetic appeal like this from the leader of a country of five hundred million people who are our valiant neighbours, I have to ask myself what is going to be my attitude to China which is desperately crying out for help.

What can I make of these Chinese ? They read a book backwards ; they write a line downwards, vertically instead of horizontally, starting on the right side and ending on the left side of the paper ; they shake hands with themselves. They are fighting a war such as no other occidental nation would have the patience to fight. They do not want peace, unless it is peace with honour. If they do not triumph, then all that they fought for and stood for will be in ruins. And

that "all" embraces civilization as we have known it through the years. And the amazing thing is that while they are fighting they are looking ahead. They are planning for the days after the war, even though the end of the war is by no means in sight. What are they planning for? The whole feeling in China is one of waiting for the end of the war, without any fear of what that end would mean. In their hearts they seem to be sure that when the noise of the cannons dies down they must be at the other more important job of reconstruction which faces them. They have to rebuild not just the towns, the cities and the villages, but the nation itself. Five years of war have shaken them. The people, the buildings, the whole administration must be built anew.

I think China has made up its mind that its destiny lies with the democracies. That is, of course, if democracy itself survives in the world.

There will be great changes in evidence in that new China when the time comes. I foresee the Kuomintang gradually disintergrating and giving place to a more progressive party which will be drawn largely from the left wing, even as far left as the Reds. In that new China we will hear the names of Mao Tse-Tung and Chow En-Lai and some others that are not known to you and me. Chiang Kai Shek is China today, even as Churchill is England-at-war and Mahatma Gandhi is India-before-independence. But I am thinking now of After-Chiang and after the war. Chiang has undoubtedly unified China in face of the

aggressor, but the aggressor has also helped to bring about this unity. Will that unity last, when there is no longer an aggressor ? Will Chiang still hold China when at the frontiers there is no more the threat of a Japanese invasion ? If it was just Chiang, I would say "yes," but with Chiang goes the Kuomintang and the party-spirit and men like Dr. Kung and the "haves" of China and the ruling class and vested interests. Will these survive the war ?

Chiang Kai Shek is an amazing man. His leadership is unquestioned. His unification of the means of resisting aggression is rock-like, inspite of the strong divisions in the politics of those who are united under him. As a leader he is essentially a militarist. He thinks and acts like one. His shooting of the Reds, his whole attitude towards the Communists was not dictated by a desire to acquire power. He acted as a disciplinarian taking for granted that he was the supreme generalissimo. It is difficult to accept this, but that is the explanation and it is understandable, if you bear in mind the man. In a way it would be accurate to say that Chiang's is a sort of one-man military dictatorship directed towards the attainment of a true democracy. It is almost fascinating to see one dictator fight another for the attainment of a democracy which is not yet there. So that Chiang's role in China today is very strange.

Chiang has the makings of a Lenin and a Gandhi, if only he could be detached from his relations. That is the other side of him. The Kungs and the Soongs

and all those families who have traditionally and heriditarily dominated China. That is a sort of merchant and vested-interest class-domination, tagged on to the military domination of the Generalissimo and remaining in power only because of the Generalissimo. But this attachment of Chiang is not without its consequences. It influences him in many ways and it detracts from the supreme militarist dictatorship which is his. While China does not mind subscribing as a whole to the dictatorship of the Generalissimo, because it is convinced of Chiang's sincerity to fight the aggressor, China resents the tagged-on dictatorship of the Kungs and the Soongs. The Generalissimo has shown that sometimes he has been susceptible to being influenced by that element, which is always so close to him and which handles on his behalf some of the important departments of state, such as finance and industry. This is the weakness of Chiang and some day it may prove to be the cause of his undoing, but in any case not before the end of the war. For the period of the war Chiang's leadership is supreme. This is not a prophecy ; it is a fact.

But almost as soon as the war is over I think that the period of tutelage will abruptly come to an end. All over the world these mandates and guardianships will cease to operate. At long last the meek will inherit the earth. The common man of all the countries who has so long been pushed into the background will come forward to take charge of his destiny. The big men have played havoc with the

lives of more than one generation and at the polls of the post-war world we will see a different count.

In his book *Off The Record*, Charles Graves publishes a letter he received when he attacked the Labour Leader, Bevin, for making what Graves considered a 'political' speech in war-time. Graves had referred to Ernest Bevin's ranting political speech and the letter was in reference to Graves's comment on Bevin. The letter was from "One of the Dunkirk Boys." It read :

"I am sorry that you consider Bevin's speech to be *rant*. You may think it rant, but, by God, it epitomizes what we lads who are in the Army at the present time—cut off from everything—are determined to bring about, if ever we get back to normal. The abolition of all class privileges, nationalization of railways and the land, doing away with the so-called governing class and the substitution of brains (instead of the Old School Tie...) for each and every public appointment, abolition of nepotism, father's son, hereditary appointments, etc. If you think that any of these things will remain, you are living in a fool's paradise..."

That is the new order—the silhouette of the shape of things to come. It will be the order the world over. Great Britain, China and India included. I am quite clear on this point. There will be a struggle—a last struggle for the maintenance of the *status quo* by those whose future depends upon such a maintenance. But I think the resistance of the haves will gradually fizzle out.

* * *

SUCH is China as I saw it in one solitary month of its five-year war. A fragment of China but symbolic of the struggle and of the spirit of the people. How true Galvin was when he said to me: "Don't expect anything of Chungking, because there is nothing to expect, except the spirit that permeates the place. But if you can imbibe some of that spirit you will feel the richer for it."

I can now smile at that naive question of mine to an important official of the Department of Information of the Government of India, when I asked what he would advise me to take with me to China, and at his answer, : "I should think a dinner jacket should be enough."

Now I am back home and China is far away— across the breadth of India, across and over Burma— far, far East. Edgar Snow suggested that as I had written "I Go West" I should call this book: "I Go East", because India is to me the centre of the world, the point in terms of which I must always chart my position wherever I am. It is the angle in terms of which I write and see and think and feel.

So I am back to the starting point. But the feeling is more that of being neutralized rather than just being neutral. Against the background of those events which I watched so closely, if only for a brief moment, the things around me feel so unreal, so unsatisfying, almost unsatisfactory.

Frustration begins anew in more ways than one.

APPENDIX

DESPATCH of the Eighth Route Army during the month of January 1942.

1. *In South Hopei:*

a) On the 6th of January a unit of our army made an assault on the enemy along the highway to the south of Kao Tang, west Shantung. They were encountered by the enemy of about 300 odd men in the neighbourhood of Tung Gia Miao. After two hours' fighting, we inflicted on the enemy a loss of over 30 dead and wounded, including both enemy and puppet troops, took 50 more puppets, 2 light machine guns, over 60 rifles, 2 bomb-throwers.

b) On the 9th, the same unit again concentrated its attack on Liu-lin, a point to the north of Kuang-tou. 20 puppets were taken prisoners. The unit captured 10 rifles and quantities of ammunition.

c) On the 12th, the puppet and enemy that occupied the point Chin Chia Chuang in Cu'ui Yang (north of Tsing-Ho), in 4 groups, attacked our position in the neighbourhood of Lu-tou. Meanwhile the enemy in Wu Cheng advanced toward Lian Tang Chi, trying to terminate the guerrilla units at these points. We

found out the plot of the enemy beforehand and having been well prepared, intercepted enemy's advancing lines and wiped out the enemy, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy and puppet. Our loss was also very heavy.

d) The same day, over 3,000 enemy and puppet who occupied Ta Ming, Wei Hsien and the neighbourhood, intended to 'mop up' our army in the area of Jen Ming Chi, of Chang Ho, equipped with more than 10 tanks. Over 1,000 puppet, under the command of Li In-lin, carried out an attack on the line of Wha Yung along River Chang in order to co-ordinate the enemy from Te Ming. Our detachment under the command of Yang fought with the enemy in the areas of Wei Hsien. After a whole-day struggle inflicted on the enemy and puppet a loss of over 200 dead and wounded and abundant ammunition. Later on, after considerable concentrations of enemy reinforcement, the hostiles fought with our army along the line Fang Chian Chi. With the co-operation of the people, we drove back the enemy at last. In this engagement very heavy casualties were suffered by both sides.

e) On the 18th, a unit of our army fought the enemy who occupied the south-west of Sin Ho and took over 30 puppet Self-defence Corps members, over 20 rifles, 6 horses and donkeys. On the 27th another unit of our army made an assault on the enemy line connecting Nan Kung and Chu Lu, and inflicted on them a loss of over 60 dead and wounded and captured abundant ammunition and war supplies.

2. *In West Hopei:*

a) On the 13th, a part of a certain detachment made an assault on a point called Suinian, north-east of Ping San, and inflicted a loss of over 40 enemy bodies on the field, and more than 10 puppet deserters came over to our army with their weapons during the fierce fighting. The deserters have been transferred to a certain point and having been reorganized were undergoing training.

b) Next day, the same unit of the detachment attacked the enemy near Yung Tian Chen. In about two hours we routed the enemy. In this engagement the enemy suffered a loss of about 30 enemy and puppet, including dead and wounded.

c) Several hundred enemy troops in Chih Cheng attacked, on the 15th, our force very fiercely but they were soon wiped out by our local guerrilla units.

d) On the 16th over 1,000 people, motivated by our army, despite the heavy snow, destroyed over 10 li ditch (for fortifying the road) and routed the enemy unit of over 100 men that came out of Tang Hsien. In this engagment one enemy and over 10 puppet were taken prisoners. The ammunition and war supplies are very abundant.

3. *In Central Hopei,*

(a *communique* issued in the middle of January):

a) On the 10th a part of the Eighteenth Guerrilla Army made an assault on Liu Tian Chun, west of Wu Gi. After half an hour's fighting the unit exterminated the whole enemy force that amounted to over 40 enemy

and puppet, including dead and wounded, and captured over 30 enemy and puppet prisoners, 1 light machine-gun, 60 odd rifles, over 30,000 bullets, 1 telephone set.

b) On the 11th, a part of our army attacked the position of the enemy to the north-east of Cheng Ting and the enemy suffered over 60 dead and wounded. Soon after considerable concentrations of enemy reinforcements were transported by a number of motors but the enemy was likewise defeated. In this engagement destroyed 7 or 8 li highway between Cheng Ting and Wu Gi and filled up over 10 li ditch (for fortifying the road) beside the Peiping-Hankow railway to the north of Cheng Ting, and retook over 800 Chin telegraphic wire.

c) Meanwhile another part of the army made an assault on the enemy at San Li Chun, south of Ding Hsien and killed 30 enemy troops and captured 1 light machine gun, over 20 rifles, and mined in the neighbourhood of the railway and destroyed a railway train filled with soldiers. In view of this serious situation the enemy were strengthening in this area.

4. *In Southern Shantaung:*

a) On the 8th, about 1,000 enemy occupied the points Tsing-to, Shang-dian, Ho-yang, made an assault on a unit of our Eighteenth Guerrilla Army stationed in Sun-tsu. They encountered a whole day fighting. 50 enemy troops killed and we lost 15 men.

b) On the 10th one of our units made an assault on Shih Tou Lin, north-west Giu Chai, Five catles were destroyed by our army. We inflicted on the

enemy grave losses and captured abundant military equipment and supplies.

c) On the 12th, the same unit attacked Yu Kou an enemy point to the north-east of Tsing-to and destroyed 3 enemy fortifications. The enemy abandoned on the field of action about 150 killed.

d) On the 13th, the unit again attacked Si Chi Kou, Shih Yan and the neighbourhood to the east of Ling Sin. After a few hours' fighting we routed the enemy and inflicted on the enemy and its puppets a loss of about 40 killed and wounded.

e) Another unit of our army attacked, on the 11th, Dan Gai Chuang enemy position, south-east of Tai An and all the enemy were killed.

In revenge, on the 12th, and the 13th the enemy stationed in Tai An and Sin Tai numbered 2,000 carried out a counter-attack but were wiped out by our brave fighters. In this engagement over 300 enemy and puppet were killed and wounded and we captured many trophies.

f) In Sin Sui and Mong In area, from 15th to 18th, our army captured Yang Gia Chuang, Chu Gia Chueng, Lo Gia Chuang, Chu Gia Lou. We took 300 prisoners of the puppet Self-defence Corps, including a brigadier, 40 rifles, 300 muskets, over 10,000 chin gun powder and much other ammunition and food. On the 27th, one of our units, co-ordinated with over 1,000 people, attacked the point Do Chuang, south-east of Mong In, inflicted on the enemy and puppet a loss of over 100 dead and wounded and destroyed 30 li highway.

5. *In Giou Tung, East Shantung:*

a) In the middle of January, over 500 enemy who occupied Weihaiwei, made an assault on our army near the area Sui Chou Kou and the former encountered a counter-attack. Over 70 enemy bodies were left on the battlefield, and 17 puppet were taken prisoners. We captured 1 light machine-gun and 30 rifles. On the 30th, a unit of our army attacked the enemy at Huai Shang Tian point, in Mou Ping. Over 30 hostile garrisons were wholly killed by our army. The same day another unit attacked Giu Sheh Tian, Weihaiwei and destroyed 40 enemy and captured abundant ammunition as well as bullets.

6. *In North Shantung:*

a) In the week from 13th to 19th, we drove back over 2,000 enemy who came from points Chi Tung, Chin Chien, Gou Wan, Yue Hsin respectively. Over 8,000 enemy from Hsiens Tsan Hua, Shou Kuang, Kuang Jou, Bo Hsin were routed and the casualties of the enemy were very heavy."